

THE WARRIOR'S WAY

By Don Juan Matus

as told to

Don Carlos Castaneda

INTRODUCTION

All material in this book is taken from the first four of Don Carlos Castaneda's books of Toltec Knowledge. This has been done to isolate the teachings proper from the story of Castaneda's apprenticeship. Its use is intended to be supplemental and complementary to the original work. It should be noted that these teachings were specifically directed to Don Carlos, and were not necessarily taught as they would have been to another apprentice. Nonetheless, it is hoped they will provide useful guidance to the sincere student.

-Editor

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BALANCE

YOUR SPIRIT IS UNBALANCED

You dwell upon yourself too much. That's the trouble. That produces a terrible fatigue, and that fatigue will make you deaf and blind to everything else. Seek and see the marvels all around you. You will get tired of looking at yourself alone.

The way I see it you want to cling to your arguments, despite the fact that they bring nothing to you; you want to remain the same even at the cost of your well-being. I'm talking about the fact that you're not complete. You have no peace.

Well-being is a condition one has to groom, a condition one has to become acquainted with in order to seek it. You don't know what well-being is because you have never experienced it. The only thing you know how to seek is a sense of disorientation, ill-being and confusion.

In order to accomplish the feat of making yourself miserable you have to work in a most intense fashion, and it is absurd you have never realized you can work just the same in making yourself complete and strong. The trick is in what one emphasizes. We either make ourselves miserable, or we make ourselves strong. The amount of work is the same.

You indulge. You feel that indulging in doubts and tribulations is the sign of a sensitive man. Well, the truth of the matter is that you're the farthest thing from being sensitive. So why pretend? A warrior accepts in humbleness what he is.

You always insist on knowing things from the beginning, but there's no beginning; the beginning is only in your thought. You insist on explaining things as if the whole world were composed of things that can be explained. Why should the world be only as you think it is? Who gave you the authority to say so? To believe the world is only as you think it is is stupid. The world is a mysterious place.

THE PATH OF KNOWLEDGE

Let's say that a rule of thumb for you should be that when you come to see me you should come prepared to die. If you come ready to die, there shouldn't be any pitfalls or unwelcome surprises, or any unnecessary acts. Everything should gently fall into place because you're expecting nothing.

Man lives only to learn. And if he learns it is because that is the nature of his lot, for good or bad. We do confuse ourselves deliberately. All of us are aware of our doings. Our puny reason deliberately makes itself into the monster it fancies itself to be. It's too little for such a big mold though.

There are worlds upon worlds, right here in front of us. And they are nothing to laugh at. Every time one is careless in matters of sorcery, one is playing with an imminent and senseless death that could be averted by being thoughtful and aware. One goes to knowledge or to war with fear, with respect, aware that one is going to war, and with absolute confidence in oneself. Put your trust in yourself, not in me.

Out there, there is only knowledge. Knowledge is frightening, true; but if a warrior accepts the frightening nature of knowledge he cancels out its awesomeness. Knowledge is a most peculiar affair, especially for a warrior. Knowledge for a warrior is something that comes at once, engulfs him, and passes on.

Knowledge comes floating like specks of gold dust, the same dust that covers the wings of moths. So, for a warrior, knowledge is like taking a shower, or being rained on by specks of gold dust.

Think of this. The world doesn't yield to us directly, the description of the world stands in between. So, properly speaking, we are always one step removed and our experience of the world is always a recollection of the experience. We are perennially recollecting the instant that has just happened, just passed. We recollect, recollect, recollect.

There is no future. The future is only a way of talking. For a sorcerer there is only the here and now.

Solidity, corporeality are memories. Therefore, like everything else we feel about the world, they are memories we accumulate. Memories of the description. You have the memory of my solidity, therefore you feel me as being solid.

We are perceivers. We are an awareness; we are not objects; we have no solidity. We are boundless. The world of objects and solidity is a way of making our passage on earth convenient. It is only a description that was created to help us. We, or rather our reason, forget that the description and thus entrap the totality of ourselves in a vicious circle from which we rarely escape in our lifetime.

A phony sorcerer tries to explain everything in the world with explanations he is not sure about, and so everything is witchcraft. But then you're no better. You also want to explain everything your way but you're not sure of your explanation either.

The path of knowledge is a forced one. In order to learn we must be spurred. In the path of knowledge we are always fighting something, avoiding something, prepared for something; and that something is always inexplicable, greater, more powerful than us. The inexplicable forces will come to you, so there is nothing you can do now but prepare yourself for the struggle.

But there's no emptiness in the life of a man of knowledge, I tell you. Everything is filled to the brim. Everything is filled to the brim and everything is equal.

WARRIORS

If you really feel your spirit is distorted you should fix it-purge it, make it perfect, because there is no other task in our entire lives which is more worthwhile. Not to fix the spirit is to seek death, and that is the same as to seek nothing, since death is going to overtake us regardless of anything. To seek the perfection of the warrior's spirit is the only task worthy of our manhood.

My benefactor said that when a man embarks on the paths of sorcery he becomes aware, in a gradual manner, that ordinary life has been forever left behind. That knowledge is indeed a frightening affair; that the means of the ordinary world are no longer a buffer for him; and that he must adopt a new way of life if he is going to survive. The first thing he ought to do, at that point, is to want to become a warrior, a very important step and decision.

A warrior starts off with the certainty that his spirit is off balance; then by living in full control and awareness, but without hurry or compulsion, he does his ultimate best to gain his balance.

There is no flaw in the warrior's way. Follow it and your acts cannot be criticized by anyone.

The basic difference between an ordinary man and a warrior is that a warrior takes everything as a challenge while an ordinary man takes everything either as a blessing or a curse. A warrior must be calm and collected and never lose his grip. Only as a warrior can one withstand the path of knowledge. A warrior cannot complain or regret anything. His life is an endless challenge, and challenges cannot possibly be good or bad. Challenges are simply challenges.

You hinge everything on the feeling that everything is too much for you. No matter how much you like to feel sorry for yourself, you have to change that. It doesn't jibe with the life of a warrior.

All of us go through the same shenanigans. The only way to overcome them is to persist in acting like a warrior. The rest comes of itself and by itself. The rest is knowledge and power. Men of knowledge have both. And yet none of them could tell how they got to have them, except that they kept on acting like warriors and at a given moment everything changed.

A warrior must be fluid and must shift harmoniously with the world around him whether it is the world of reason or the world of will.

The most dangerous part of that shifting comes forth every time the warrior finds that the world is neither the one nor the other. I was told that the only way to succeed in that crucial shifting was by proceeding in one's actions as if one believed. In other words the secret of a warrior is that he believes without believing. But obviously a warrior cannot just say he believes and let it go at that. That would be too easy. To just believe would exonerate him from examining his situation. A warrior, whenever he has to involve himself with believing, does it as a choice, as an expression of his innermost predilection. A warrior doesn't believe, a warrior has to believe.

Only as a warrior can one survive the path of knowledge, because the art of a warrior is to balance the terror of being a man with the wonder of being a man.

Any warrior can become a man of knowledge. As I told you, a warrior is an impeccable hunter that hunts power. If he succeeds in his hunting he can be a man of knowledge.

But you want to find the meaning of life. A warrior doesn't care about meanings. If Lucas lived like a warrior--and he had a chance to, as we all have a chance to--he would set his life strategically. Thus if he couldn't avoid an accident that crushed his ribs, he would have found means to offset that handicap, or avoid its consequences, or battle against them. If Lucas were a warrior he wouldn't be sitting in his dingy house dying of starvation. He would be battling to the end.

You must cultivate the feeling that a warrior needs nothing. You say you need help, help for what? You have everything needed for the extravagant journey that is your life. I have tried to teach you that the real experience is to be a man, and that what counts is being alive; life is the little detour that we are taking now. Life itself is sufficient, self-explanatory and complete.

A warrior understands this and lives accordingly; therefore one may say without being presumptuous that the experience of experiences is being a warrior.

If a warrior needs solace he simply chooses anyone and expresses to that person every detail of his turmoil. After all, the warrior is not seeking to be understood or helped; by talking he's merely relieving himself of his pressure. That is, providing that the warrior is given to talking; if he's not he tells no one. But you're not living like a warrior altogether. Not yet anyway. And the pitfalls that you encounter must be truly monumental. You have all my sympathy.

A warrior makes his own mood. You didn't know that.

The hardest thing in the world is to assume the mood of a warrior. It is of no use to be sad and complain and feel justified in doing so, believing that someone is always doing something to us. Nobody is doing anything to anybody, much less a warrior.

Self-pity doesn't jibe with power. The mood of a warrior calls for control over himself and at the same time it calls for abandoning himself. It's a difficult technique. It is required that you hold onto yourself and let go of yourself at the same time. That's what I call the mood of a warrior. It's convenient to always act in such a mood. It cuts through the crap and leaves one purified. One needs the mood of a warrior for every single act. Otherwise one becomes distorted.

There is no power in life that lacks this mood. Look at yourself. Everything offends and upsets you. You whine and complain and feel that everyone is

making you dance to their tune. You are a leaf at the mercy of the wind. There is no power in your life. What an ugly feeling that must be.

The self-confidence of the warrior is not the self-confidence of the average man. The average man seeks certainty in the eyes of the onlooker and calls that self-confidence. The warrior seeks impeccability in his own eyes and calls that humbleness. The average man is hooked to his fellow men, while the warrior is hooked only to himself. Perhaps you are chasing rainbows. You're after the self-confidence of the average man, when you should be after the humbleness of a warrior. The difference between the two is remarkable. Self-confidence entails knowing something for sure; humbleness means being impeccable in one's actions and feelings.

A warrior cannot be helpless, or bewildered, not under any circumstances. For a warrior there is time only for his impeccability; everything else drains his power, impeccability replenishes it.

Impeccability is to do your best in whatever you're engaged in.

The key to all these matters of impeccability is the sense of having or not having time. As a rule of thumb, when you feel and act like an immortal being that has all the time in the world you are not impeccable; at those times you should turn, look around, and then you will realize that your feeling of having time is an idiocy. There are no survivors on this earth.

A warrior is never idle and never in a hurry.

A warrior knows that he is waiting and what he is waiting for; and while he waits he wants nothing, and thus whatever little thing he gets is more than he can take. If he needs to eat he finds a way, because he is not hungry; if something hurts his body he finds a way to stop it, because he is not in pain. To be hungry or to be in pain means that the man has abandoned himself and is no longer a warrior; and the forces of his hunger and pain will destroy him.

A rule of thumb for a warrior is that he makes his decisions so carefully that nothing that may happen as a result of them can surprise him, much less drain his power. Worry and think before you make any decision, but once you make it, be on your way free from worries or thoughts. There will be a million other decisions still awaiting you. That's the warrior's way.

Life for a warrior is an exercise in strategy.

You are aware of everything only when you think you should be; the condition of a warrior, however, is to be aware of everything at all times. A warrior is never available; never is he standing in the road, waiting to be clobbered. Thus he cuts to a minimum his chances of the unforeseen. What you call accidents are, most of the time, very easy to avoid, except for fools who are living helter-skelter.

A warrior, on the other hand, is a hunter. He calculates everything. That's control. But once his calculations are over, he acts. He lets go! That's abandon. A warrior is not a leaf at the mercy of the wind. No one can push him; no one can make him do things against himself or against his better judgment. A warrior is tuned to survive, and he survives in the best of all possible fashions.

The mood of a warrior is not so far-fetched for yours or anybody's world. You need it in order to cut through all the guff.

To achieve the mood of a warrior is not a simple matter. It is a revolution. To regard the lion and the water rats and our fellow men as equals is a magnificent act of the warrior spirit. It takes power to do that.

A warrior takes his lot, whatever it may be, and accepts it in ultimate humbleness. He accepts in humbleness what he is, not as grounds for regret, but as a living challenge.

It takes time for every one of us to understand that point and fully live it. I, for instance, hated the mere mention of the word "humbleness." I'm an Indian and we Indians have always been humble and have done nothing else but lower our heads. I thought humbleness was not in the warrior's way. I was wrong! I know now that the humbleness of a warrior is not the humbleness of a beggar. The warrior lowers his head to no one, but at the same time, he doesn't permit anyone to lower his head to him. The beggar, on the other hand, falls to his knees at the drop of a hat and scrapes the floor for anyone he deems to be higher; but at the same time he demands that someone lower than him scrape the floor for him.

That's why I don't understand what masters feel like. I know only the humbleness of a warrior, and that will never permit me to be anyone's master.

You like the humbleness of a beggar. You bow your head to reason.

A warrior is always ready. To be a warrior is not a simple matter of wishing to be one. It is rather an endless struggle that will go on to the very last moment of our lives. Nobody is born a warrior, in exactly the same way that nobody is born a reasonable being. We make ourselves into the one or the other.

It's your duty to put your mind at ease. Warriors do not win victory by beating their heads against the walls, but by overtaking the walls. Warriors jump over the walls; they don't demolish them.

The spirit of the warrior is not geared to indulging and complaining, nor is it geared to winning or losing. The spirit of a warrior is geared only to struggle, and every struggle is a warrior's last battle on earth. Thus the outcome matters very little to him. In his last battle on earth a warrior lets his spirit flow free and clear. And as he wages his battle, knowing that his will is impeccable, a warrior laughs and laughs.

This is your world. You are a man of that world. And out there, in that world is your hunting ground. As a hunter, a warrior knows that the world is made to be used. So he uses every bit of it. A warrior is like a pirate that has no qualms in taking and using anything he wants, except that the warrior doesn't mind, or he doesn't feel insulted when he is used and taken himself.

A warrior selects the items that make his world. He selects deliberately, for every item he chooses is a shield that protects him from the onslaughts of the forces he is striving to use. A warrior would use his shields to protect himself from his ally, for instance.

The average man, who is equally surrounded by those inexplicable forces, is oblivious to them because he has other kinds of special shields to protect himself. Look around you. People are doing that which people do. Those are their shields. Whenever a sorcerer has an encounter with any of those inexplicable and unbending forces we have talked about, his gap opens, making him more susceptible to his death than he ordinarily is; we die through that gap, therefore if it is open one should have his will ready to fill it; that is if one is a warrior. If one is not a warrior, like yourself, then one has no other recourse but to use the activities of daily life to take one's mind away from the fright of the encounter and thus allow one's gap to close.

A warrior encounters those inexplicable and unbending forces because he is deliberately seeking them, thus he is always prepared for the encounter.

I personally believe that to be a warrior is more suitable than anything else. Therefore I have endeavored to show you those forces as a sorcerer perceives them, because only under their terrifying impact can one become a warrior. To see without first being a warrior would make you weak; it would give you a false meekness, a desire to retreat; your body would decay because you would become indifferent. It is my personal commitment to make you a warrior so you won't crumble.

I have heard you say time and time again that you are always prepared to die. I don't regard that feeling as necessary. I think it is a useless indulgence. A warrior should be prepared only to battle. I have also heard you say that your parents injured your spirit. I think the spirit of man is something that can be injured very easily, although not by the same acts you yourself call injurious. I believe your parents did injure you by making you indulgent and soft and given to dwelling.

There is nothing in this world that a warrior cannot account for. You see, a warrior considers himself already dead, so there is nothing for him to lose. The worst has already happened to him, therefore he's clear and calm; judging him by his acts or by his words, one would never suspect that he has witnessed everything.

A warrior treats everything with respect and does not trample on anything unless he has to. A warrior never turns his back to power without atoning for the favors received. In order to become a man of knowledge one must be a warrior, not a whimpering child. One must strive without giving up, without a complaint, without flinching, until one sees, only to realize that nothing matters.

THE PATH WITH A HEART

It is the consistent choice of the path with heart which makes a warrior different from the average man. He knows that a path has heart when he is one with it, when he experiences a great peace and pleasure in traversing its length.

Anything is one of a million paths. Therefore you must always keep in mind that a path is only a path; if you feel you should not follow it, you must not stay with it under any conditions. To have such clarity you must lead a disciplined life. Only then will you know that any path is only a path and there is no affront to oneself or to others in dropping it if that is what your

heart tells you to do. But your decision to keep on the path or to leave it must be free of fear or ambition. I warn you. Look at every path closely and deliberately. Try it as many times as you think necessary. This question is one that only a very old man asks. My benefactor told me about it once when I was young, and my blood was too vigorous for me to understand it. Now I understand it. I will tell you what it is; does this path have a heart? If it does, the path is good; if it doesn't it is of no use. Both paths lead nowhere; but one has a heart and the other doesn't. One makes for a joyful journey; as long as you follow it you are one with it. The other makes you curse your life. One makes you strong. The other weakens you.

Today I am neither a warrior or a diablero. For me there is only the traveling on the paths that have a heart, on any path that may have a heart. There I travel, and the only worthwhile challenge for me is to traverse its full length. And there I travel, looking, looking breathlessly.

HUNTERS

If you would live out here in the wilderness you would know that during the twilight the wind becomes power. A hunter that is worth his salt knows that, and acts accordingly. He used the twilight and that power hidden in the wind.

If it is convenient to him, the hunter hides from the power by covering himself and remaining motionless until the twilight is gone and the power has sealed him into its protection. The protection of the power seals you like a cocoon. A hunter can stay out in the open and no puma or coyote or slimy bug would bother him. A mountain lion could come up to the hunter's nose and sniff him, and if the hunter does not move, the lion would leave. I can guarantee you that.

If the hunter, on the other hand, wants to be noticed all he has to do is stand on a hilltop at the time of the twilight and the power will nag him and seek him all night. Therefore if a hunter wants to travel all night or if he wants to be kept awake he must make himself available to the wind.

Therein lies the secret of the great hunters. To be available and unavailable at the precise turn of the road.

You must learn to become deliberately available and unavailable. As your life goes now, you are unwittingly available at all times. Let me put it another way. It makes no difference to hide if everyone knows you are hiding.

Your problems right now stem from that. When you are hiding everyone knows that you are hiding, and when you are not, you are available for everyone to take a poke at you. We are fools, all of us, and you cannot be different. At one time in my life I, like you, made myself available over and over again until there was nothing of me left for anything except perhaps crying. And that I did, just like yourself. I was younger than you though, but one day I had enough and I changed. Let's say that one day, when I was becoming a hunter, I learned the secret of being available and unavailable.

You must take yourself away. You must retrieve yourself from the middle of a trafficked way. Your whole being is there, thus it is of no use to hide; you would only imagine that you are hidden. Being in the middle of the road means that everyone passing by watches your comings and goings.

Hey! Whatever happened to your friend? That girl you used to really like. You once had a woman, a very dear woman, and then one day you lost her. Why isn't she with you?

There are not so many reasons. There is only one. You made yourself too available.

Being inaccessible is the point. I brought up the memory of this person only as a means to show you directly what I couldn't show you with the wind.

You lost her because you were accessible; you were always within her reach and your life was a routine one. It was and it is a routine. It is an unusual routine and that gives you the impression that it is not a routine, but I assure you that it is.

The art of a hunter is to become inaccessible. In the case of that girl it would've meant that you had to become a hunter and meet her sparingly. Not the way you did. You stayed with her day after day, until the only feeling that remained was boredom. True?

To be inaccessible means that you touch the world around you sparingly. You don't eat five quail; you eat one. You don't damage the plants just to make a barbecue pit. You don't expose yourself to the power of the wind unless it is mandatory. You don't use and squeeze people until they have shriveled to nothing, especially the people you love.

A hunter knows he will lure game into his traps over and over again so he doesn't worry. To worry is to become accessible, unwittingly accessible. Once you worry you cling to anything out of desperation; and once you cling

you are bound to get exhausted, or to exhaust whoever or whatever you are clinging to.

I've told you already that to be inaccessible does not mean to hide or to be secretive. It doesn't mean that you can't deal with people either. A hunter uses his world sparingly and with tenderness, regardless of whether the world might be things, or plants, or animals, or people, or power. A hunter deals intimately with his world and yet he is inaccessible to that same world. He is inaccessible because he's not squeezing his world out of shape. He taps it lightly, stays for as long as he needs to, and then swiftly moves away leaving hardly a mark.

You worry about eating every day around noontime, and around six in the evening, and around eight in the morning. You worry about eating at those times even if you're not hungry.

It'll be easy for you to realize that a good hunter knows one thing above all-- he knows the routines of his prey. That's what makes him a good hunter.

To be a hunter is not just to trap game. A hunter that is worth his salt does not catch game because he sets his traps, or because he knows the routines of his prey, but because he himself has no routines. This is his advantage. He is not at all like the animals he is after, fixed by heavy routines and predictable quirks. He is free, fluid and unpredictable.

As I told you before, in my eyes you behave like your prey. Once in my life someone pointed out the same thing to me, so you're not unique in that. All of us behave like the prey we are after. That, of course, also makes us prey for something or someone else. Now the concern of a hunter, who knows all this, is to stop being a prey himself. Do you see what I mean?

A good hunter changes his ways as often as he needs.

A hunter must not only know about the habits of his prey, he also must know that there are powers on this earth that guide men and animals and everything that is living. Powers that guide our lives and our deaths.

To be a hunter means that one knows a great deal. It means that one can see the world in different ways. In order to be a hunter one must be in perfect balance with everything else, otherwise hunting would become a meaningless chore. For instance, today we took a little snake. I had to apologize to her for cutting her life off so suddenly and definitely; I did knowing that my own life will also be cut off someday in very much the

same fashion; suddenly and definitely. So, all in all, we and the snakes are on a par. One of them fed us today.

I am a hunter. I leave very little to chance. Perhaps I should explain to you that I learned to be a hunter. I have not always lived the way I do now. At one point in my life I had to change. Now I'm pointing the direction to you. I'm guiding you. I know what I'm talking about; someone taught me all this. I didn't figure it out for myself.

I'm having a gesture with you. Other people have had a similar gesture; someday you yourself will have the same gesture with others. Let's say that it is my turn. One day I found out that if I wanted to be a hunter worthy of self respect I had to change my way of life. I used to whine and complain a great deal. I had good reason to feel shortchanged. I am an Indian and Indians are treated like dogs. There was nothing I could do to remedy that, so all I was left with was my sorrow. But then my good fortune spared me and someone taught me to hunt. And I realized that the way I lived was not living...so I changed it.

PERSONAL POWER

Power is something that a warrior deals with. At first it's an incredible, farfetched affair; it is hard to even think about it. This is what's happening to you now. Then power becomes a serious matter; one may not have it, or one may not even fully realize that it exists, yet one knows that something is there, something which was not noticeable before. Next power is manifested as something uncontrollable that comes to oneself. It is not possible for me to say how it comes to oneself. It is not possible for me to say how it comes or what it really is. It is nothing and yet it makes marvels appear before your very eyes. And finally power is something in oneself, something that controls one's acts and yet obeys one's command.

We are luminous beings. And for a luminous being only personal power matters. But if you ask me what personal power is, I have to tell you that my explanation will not explain it.

I'm as young as I want to be. This again is a matter of personal power. If you store power your body can perform unbelievable feats. On the other hand if you dissipate power you'll be a fat old man in no time.

My benefactor was a man of violent nature. He stored power through that feeling. Everything he did was strong and direct. He left me with a memory

of something crushing through things. And everything that happened to him took place in that manner.

Personal power is a feeling, something like being lucky. Or one may call it a mood. Personal power is something one acquires regardless of one's origin. A warrior is a hunter of power, and I am going to teach you how to hunt and store it. The difficulty with you, which is the difficulty with all of us, is to be convinced. You need to believe that personal power can be used and that it is possible to store it; but you haven't been convinced so far.

To be convinced means that you can act by yourself. It will take you a great deal of effort to do that. Much more has to be done. You have just begun.

A Man of Knowledge is one who has followed truthfully the hardships of learning; a man who has, without rushing or faltering, gone as far as he can in unraveling the secrets of personal power. He knows for a fact that it will make him act in the most appropriate fashion.

Trust your personal power. That's all one has in this whole mysterious world. A warrior is impeccable when he trusts his personal power regardless of whether it is small or enormous.

Power is a very peculiar affair. It is impossible to pin it down and say what it really is. It is a feeling that one has about certain things. Power is personal. It belongs to oneself alone. My benefactor, for instance, could make a person mortally ill by merely looking at him. Women would wane away after he had set eyes on them. Yet he did not make people sick all the time, but only when his personal power was involved.

A hunter of power entraps it and then stores it away as his personal finding. Thus, personal power grows, and you may have the case of a warrior who has so much personal power that he becomes a man of knowledge.

Power is a very weird affair. In order to have it and command it one must have power to begin with. It's possible, however, to store it, little by little, until one has enough to sustain oneself in a battle of power.

There are lots of things you do now which would have seemed insane to you ten years ago. Those things themselves did not change, but your idea of yourself changed; what was impossible before is perfectly possible now and perhaps your total success in changing yourself is only a matter of time. In this affair the only possible course that a warrior has is to act consistently

and without reservations. You know enough of the warrior's way to act accordingly, but your old habits and routines stand in your way.

It doesn't matter what one reveals or keeps to oneself. Everything we do, everything we are, rests on our personal power. If we have enough of it, one word uttered to us might be sufficient to change the course of our lives. But if we don't have enough personal power the most magnificent piece of wisdom can be revealed to us and that revelation won't make a damn bit of difference.

I'm going to utter perhaps the greatest piece of knowledge anyone can voice. Let me see what you can do with it. Do you know that at this very moment you are surrounded by eternity? And do you know that you can use that eternity if you so desire?

Do you know that you can extend yourself forever in any direction? Do you know that one moment can be eternity? This is not a riddle; it's a fact, but only if you mount that moment and use it to take the totality of yourself forever in any direction.

You didn't have this knowledge before. Now you do. I have revealed it to you, but it doesn't make a bit of difference, because you don't have enough personal power to utilize my revelation. Yet if you did have enough power, my words alone would serve as the means for you to round up the totality of yourself and to get the crucial part of it out of the boundaries in which it is contained. That's the flaw with words. They always force us to feel enlightened, but when we turn around to face the world they always fail us and we end up facing the world as we always have, without enlightenment. For this reason a sorcerer seeks to act rather than talk and to this effect he gets a new description of the world--a new description where talking is not that important, and where new acts have new reflections.

One learns to act like a warrior by acting, not by talking.

There is only one way to learn, and that way is to get down to business. To only talk about power is useless. If you want to know what power is, and if you want to stress it you must tackle everything yourself.

The road to knowledge and power is very difficult and very long. Now you do have enough to wage a good battle, but not enough to stay in the dark by yourself. You'll die. The entities of the night will crush you like a bug. You can spend the night by yourself in your bed, but not in the mountains.

This applies only to the wilderness, where there are no people around, especially the wilderness in high mountains. Since the natural abodes of the entities of the night are rocks and crevices, you cannot go to the mountains from now on unless you have stored enough personal power.

You are doing it by living the way I recommended. Little by little you are plugging up all your points of drainage. You don't have to be deliberate about it, because power always finds a way. Take me as an example. I didn't know I was storing power when I first began to learn the ways of a warrior. Just like you, I thought I wasn't doing anything in particular, but that was not so. Power has the peculiarity of being unnoticeable when it is being stored.

Don't tax yourself with explanations. What I said makes no sense to you, simply because you don't have enough personal power. Yet you have more than when you started, so things have begun to happen to you.

We are going in search of power and everything you do counts. Watch the wind, especially toward the end of the day.

There is no plan when it comes to hunting power. Hunting power or hunting game is the same. A hunter hunts whatever presents itself to him. Thus he must always be in a state of readiness.

You know about the wind, and now you may hunt power in the wind by yourself. But there are other things you don't know about which are, like the wind, the center of power at certain times and at certain places.

WILL

Perhaps the first thing that one should do is to know that one can develop the will. A warrior knows this and proceeds to wait for it. Your mistake is not to know that you are waiting for your will.

What you yourself call will is character and strong disposition. What a sorcerer calls will is a force that comes from within and attaches itself to the world out there. It comes out through the belly, right here, where the luminous fibers are.

A warrior has to use his will and his patience to forget. In fact, a warrior has only his will and his patience and with them he builds anything he wants. You have started learning the ways of sorcerers. You have no more time for

retreats and regrets. You only have time to live like a warrior and work for patience and will, whether you like it or not.

I think there is no way of talking about it. Will is something very specific. It happens mysteriously. There is no real way of telling how one uses it, except that the results of using the will are astounding.

Courage is not will. Men of courage are dependable men, noble men perennially surrounded by people who flock around them and admire them; yet very few men of courage have will. Usually they are fearless men who are given to performing daring common-sense acts; most of the time a courageous man is also fearsome and feared. Will, on the other hand, has to do with astonishing feats that defy common sense.

Will is not a sixth sense. Rather it is a relation between ourselves and the perceived world.

The will develops in a warrior in spite of every opposition of the reason. Will is something very clear and powerful which can direct our acts. Will is something a man uses, for instance, to win a battle which he, by all calculations, should lose.

Will is what makes you succeed when your thoughts tell you that you're defeated. Will is what makes you invulnerable. Will is what sends a sorcerer through a wall; through space; to the moon if he wants.

Will is a force which is the true link between men and the world. The world is whatever we perceive, in whatever manner we may perceive it. Perceiving the world entails a process of apprehending whatever presents itself to us. This particular perceiving is done with our senses and our will.

An average man can 'grab' the things of the world only with his hands, or his eyes, or his ears, but a sorcerer can grab them also with his nose, or his tongue, or his will, especially with his will. I cannot really describe how it is done, but you yourself, for instance, cannot describe to me how you hear. It happens that I am also capable of hearing, so we can talk about what we hear, but not about how we hear. A sorcerer uses his will to perceive the world. That perceiving, however, is not like hearing.

When we look at the world or when we hear it, we have the impression that it is out there and that it is real. When we perceive the world with our will we know that it is not as 'out there' or as 'real' as we think.

There is a gap in us; like the soft spot on the head of a child which closes with age. This gap opens as one develops one's will, at the place of your luminous fibers. It's an opening. It allows a space for the will to shoot out, like an arrow.

When a warrior has acquired patience he is on his way to will. He knows how to wait. His death sits with him on his mat, they are friends. His death advises him, in mysterious ways, how to choose, how to live strategically. And the warrior waits.

I would say that the warrior learns without any hurry because he knows he is waiting for his will; and one day he succeeds in performing something ordinarily quite impossible to accomplish. He may not even notice his extraordinary deed. But as he keeps on performing impossible acts, or as impossible things keep on happening to him, he becomes aware that a sort of power is emerging. A power that comes out of his body as he progresses on the path of knowledge. At first it is like an itching on the belly, or a warm spot that cannot be soothed; then it becomes a pain, a great discomfort. Sometimes the pain and discomfort are so great that the warrior has convulsions for months, the more severe the convulsions the better for him. A fine power is always heralded by great pain.

When the convulsions come the warrior notices he has strange feelings about things. He notices that he can actually touch anything he wants with a feeling that comes out of his body from a spot right below or right above his navel. That feeling is the will and when he is capable of grabbing with it, one can rightfully say that the warrior is a sorcerer and has acquired will.

That pain is not absolutely necessary. I for example, have never had it and will just happened to me.

The very thing that could help you develop your will is amidst all the little things you do.

One day I was in the mountains and I stumbled upon a puma, a female one; she was very big and very hungry. I ran and she ran after me. I climbed a rock and she stood a few feet away, ready to jump. I threw rocks at her. She growled and began to charge me. It was then that my will fully came out, and I stopped her with it before she jumped on me I caressed her with my will. I actually rubbed her tits with it. She looked at me with sleepy eyes and lay down and I ran like a son of a bitch before she got over it.

Very drastic things have to happen to you in order for you to allow your body to profit from all you have learned.

Will is a power. And since it is a power it has to be controlled and tuned, and that takes time. I know that and I'm patient with you. When I was your age I was as impulsive as you. Yet I have changed. Our will operates in spite of our indulgence. For example, your will is already opening your gap, little by little.

The secret of the luminous beings is that they have another ring of power which is never used, the will. The trick of the sorcerer is the same trick of the average man. Both have a description; one, the average man, upholds it with his reason; the other, the sorcerer, upholds it with his will. Both descriptions have their rules and the rules are perceivable, but the advantage of the sorcerer is that will is more engulfing than reason.

The suggestion that I want to make at this point is that from now on you should let yourself perceive whether the description is upheld by your reason or by your will. I feel that is the only way for you to use your daily world as a challenge and a vehicle to accumulate enough personal power in order for you to get to the totality of yourself.

THE CRACK BETWEEN THE WORLDS

The particular thing to learn is how to get to the crack between the worlds and how to enter the other world. There is a crack between the two worlds, the world of the diableros and the world of living men. There is a place where the two worlds overlap. The crack is there. It opens and closes like a door in the wind. To get there a man must exercise his will. He must, I should say, develop an indomitable desire for it, a single-minded dedication. But he must do it without the help of any power or any man.

The man himself must ponder and wish up to a moment in which his body is ready to undergo the journey. That moment is announced by prolonged shaking of the limbs and violent vomiting. The man usually cannot sleep or eat, and wanes away. When the convulsions do not stop the man is ready to go, and the crack between the worlds appears right in front of his eyes like a monumental door, a crack that goes up and down.

When the crack opens the man has to slide through it. It is hard to see on the other side of the boundary. It is windy, like a sandstorm. The wind whirls around. The man then must walk in any direction. It will be a short or a long

journey, depending on his will power. A strong-willed man journeys shortly. An undecided, weak man journeys long and precariously. After this journey the man arrives at a sort of plateau.

It is possible to distinguish some of its features clearly. It is a plane above the ground. It is possible to recognize it by the wind, which there becomes even more violent, roaring all around. On top of that plateau is the entrance to the other world. And there stands a skin that separates the two worlds; dead men go through it without a noise, but we have to break it with an outcry. The wind gathers strength, the same unruly wind that blows on the plateau. When the wind has gathered enough force, the man has to be inflexible, too, so that he can fight the wind.

All he needs is a gentle shove; he does not need to be blown to the ends of the other world. Once on the other side, the man will have to wander around. His good fortune would be to find a helper nearby—not too far from the entrance. The man has to ask him for help. In his own words he has to ask the helper to teach him and make him a diablero. When the helper agrees, he kills the man on the spot, and while he is dead he teaches him.

When you make the trip yourself, depending on your luck, you may find a great diablero in the helper who will kill and teach you. Most of the time though, one encounters lesser brujos who have very little to teach. But neither you nor they have the power to refuse.

The best instance is to find a male helper lest one become the prey of a diablera, who will make one suffer in an unbelievable manner. Women are always like that. But that depends on luck alone, unless one's benefactor is a great diablero himself, in which event he will have many helpers in the other world, and can direct one to see a particular helper. My benefactor was such a man. He directed me to encounter his spirit helper.

After your return you will not be the same man. You are committed to come back and see your helper often. And you are committed to wander farther and farther from the entrance, until finally one day you will go too far and will not be able to return.

SORCERY

In order to be a sorcerer a man must be passionate. A passionate man has earthly belongings and things dear to him—if nothing else, just the path where he walks.

The world is indeed full of frightening things and we are helpless creatures surrounded by forces that are inexplicable and unbending. The average man, in ignorance, believes that those forces can be explained or changed; he really doesn't know how to do that, but he expects that the actions of mankind will explain them or change them sooner or later.

The sorcerer, on the other hand, does not think of explaining or changing them; instead he learns to use such forces by redirecting himself and adapting to their direction. That's his trick. There is very little to sorcery once you find out its trick.

Sorcery is to apply one's will to a key joint. Sorcery is interference. A sorcerer searches and finds the key joint of anything he wants to affect and then he applies his will to it. A sorcerer doesn't have to see to be a sorcerer; all he has to know is how to use his will.

A sorcerer is only slightly better off than the average man. Sorcery does not help him live a better life; in fact I should say that sorcery hinders him; it makes his life cumbersome, precarious. By opening himself to knowledge a sorcerer becomes more vulnerable than the average man. On the one hand his fellow men hate him and fear him and will strive to end his life; on the other hand the inexplicable and unbending forces that surround every one of us, by right of our being alive, are for a sorcerer a source of even greater danger.

To be pierced by a fellow man is indeed painful, but nothing in comparison to being touched by an ally. A sorcerer, by opening himself to knowledge falls prey to such forces and has only one means of balancing himself, his will; thus he must feel and act like a warrior. I will repeat this once more; only as a warrior can one survive the path of knowledge. What helps a sorcerer to live a better life is the strength of being a warrior.

To be a sorcerer is a terrible burden. I've told you that it is much better to be able to see. A man who sees is everything; in comparison the sorcerer is a sad fellow.

SEEING

If a man sees he doesn't have to live like a warrior, or like anything else, for he can see things as they really are and direct his life accordingly.

Once a man learns to see he finds himself alone in the world with nothing but folly. But when a man learns to see, he realizes that he can no longer think about the things he looks at. And if he cannot think about what he looks at everything becomes unimportant.

I didn't say worthless. I said unimportant. Everything is equal and therefore unimportant. For example, there is no way for me to say that my acts are more important than yours, or that one thing is more essential than another, therefore all things are equal, and by being equal they are unimportant.

For instance we need to look with our eyes to laugh, because only when we look at things can we catch the funny edge of the world. On the other hand, when our eyes see, everything is so equal that nothing is funny.

Our eyes look so we may laugh, or cry, or rejoice, or be sad, or be happy. I personally don't like to be sad, so whenever I witness something that would ordinarily make me sad, I simply shift my eyes and see it instead of looking at it. But when I encounter something funny I look and I laugh.

Blind men do not laugh. Their bodies jerk a little with the ripple of laughter. They have never looked at the funny edge of the world and have to imagine it. Their laughter is not roaring.

Seeing is for impeccable men. Temper your spirit now, become a warrior, learn to see, and then you'll know that there is no end to new worlds for our vision. When you see there are no longer familiar features in the world. Everything is new. Everything has never happened before. The world is incredible. Things don't disappear. They don't vanish. They simply become nothing and yet they are still there.

You want me to describe it to you so you can begin to think about it, the way you do with everything else. In the case of seeing however thinking is not the issue at all, so I cannot tell you what it is like to see.

I've told you already, seeing is not sorcery. Yet one may easily confuse them, because a man who sees can learn, in no time at all, to manipulate an ally, and may become a sorcerer. On the other hand, a man may learn certain techniques in order to command an ally and thus become a sorcerer, and yet he may never learn to see.

Besides seeing is contrary to sorcery. Seeing makes one realize the unimportance of it all.

Seeing is not a force, but rather a way of getting through things. A sorcerer may have a very strong will and yet he may not see; which means that only a man of knowledge perceives the world with his senses and with his will and also with his seeing.

Men look different when you see. You will see men as fibers of light. Yes. Fibers like white cobwebs. Very fine threads that circulate from the head to the navel. Thus a man looks like an egg of circulating fibers. And his arms and legs are like luminous bristles, bursting out in all directions.

Besides every man is in touch with everything else, not through his hands, though, but through a bunch of long fibers that shoot out from the center of his abdomen. Those fibers join a man to his surroundings; they keep his balance, they give him stability. So, as you may see someday, a man is a luminous egg whether he's a beggar or a king and there's no way to change anything, or rather, what could be changed in that luminous egg? What?

We are luminous beings and everything we are or everything we feel shows in our fibers. Humans have a brightness peculiar only to them. That's the only way to tell them apart from other luminous beings.

My benefactor was a sorcerer of great powers. He was a warrior through and through. His will was indeed his most magnificent accomplishment. But a man can go still further than that; a man can learn to see. Upon learning to see he no longer needs to live like a warrior, nor be a sorcerer. Upon learning to see a man becomes everything by becoming nothing. He, so to speak, vanishes and yet he's there. I would say that this is the time when a man can be or can get anything he desires. But he desires nothing, and instead of playing with his fellow men like they were toys, he meets them in the midst of their folly. The only difference between them is that a man who sees has no longer an active interest in his fellow men. Seeing has already detached him from absolutely everything he knew before.

CONTROLLED FOLLY

Once a man learns to see he finds himself alone in the world with nothing but folly.

Your acts, as well as the acts of your fellow men in general appear to be important to you because you have learned to think they are important. We learn to think about everything, and then we train our eyes to look as we think about the things we look at. We look at ourselves already thinking that

we are important. And therefore we've got to feel important. You don't understand me now because of your habit of thinking as you look and thinking as you think.

I told you once that our lot as men is to learn, for good or bad. I have learned to see and I tell you that nothing really matters; now it is your turn; perhaps someday you will see and you will know whether things matter or not. For me nothing matters, but perhaps for you everything will. You should know by now that a man of knowledge lives by acting, not by thinking about acting, nor by thinking about what he will think when he finishes acting. A man of knowledge chooses a path with heart and follows it; and then he looks and rejoices and laughs; and then he sees and knows. He knows that his life will be over altogether too soon; he knows that he, as well as everybody else, is not going anywhere; he knows, because he sees, that nothing is more important than anything else.

You think about your acts. Therefore you have to believe your acts are as important as you think they are, when in reality nothing of what one does is important. Nothing! But then if nothing really matters how can I go on living? It would be more simple to die; that's what you believe, because you're thinking about life, just as you're thinking now what seeing would be like.

So I cannot tell you what it is like to see. Now you want me to describe the reasons for my controlled folly and I can only tell you that controlled folly is very much like seeing; it is something you cannot think about.

Your problem is that you confuse the world with what people do. Again you're not unique in that. Every one of us do that. The things people do are the shields against the forces that surround us; what we do as people gives us comfort and makes us feel safe; what people do is rightfully very important, but only as a shield. We never learn that the things we do as people are only shields and we let them dominate and topple our lives. In fact I could say that for mankind, what people do is more important than the world itself.

The world is all that is encased here. Life, death, people, the allies, and everything else that surrounds us. The world is incomprehensible. We won't ever understand it; we won't ever unravel its secrets. Thus we must treat it as it is, a sheer mystery.

An average man doesn't do this though. The world is never a mystery for him, and when he arrives at old age he is convinced he has nothing more to

live for. An old man has not exhausted the world. He has exhausted only what people do. But in his stupid confusion he believes that the world has no more mysteries for him. What a wretched price to pay for our shields.

A warrior is aware of this confusion and learns to treat things properly. The things that people do cannot under any conditions be more important than the world. And thus a warrior treats the world as an endless mystery and what people do as an endless folly.

I am happy that you finally asked me about my controlled folly after so many years, and yet it wouldn't have mattered to me in the least if you had never asked. Yet I have chosen to feel happy, as if I cared that you asked, as if it would matter that I care. That is controlled folly.

Perhaps it's not possible to explain. Certain things in your life matter to you because they're important to you, but for me not a single thing is important any longer, neither my acts nor the acts of my fellow men. I go on living though, because I have my will. Because I have tempered my will throughout my life until it's neat and wholesome and now it doesn't matter to me that nothing matters. My will controls the folly of my life.

Take my son Eulalio as an example. He was crushed by rocks while working in the construction of the Pan-American Highway. My acts toward him at the moment of his death were controlled folly. When I came down to the blasting area he was almost dead, but his body was so strong that it kept on moving and kicking. I stood in front of him and told the boys in the road crew not to move him any more; they obeyed me and stood there surrounding my son, looking at his mangled body. I stood there too, but I did not look. I shifted my eyes so I could see his personal life disintegrating, expanding uncontrollably beyond its limits, like a fog of crystals, because that is the way life and death mix and expand. That is what I did at the time of my son's death. That's all one could ever do, and that is controlled folly. Had I looked at him I would have watched him becoming immobile and I would have felt a cry inside of me, because never again would I look at his fine figure pacing the earth. I saw his death instead, and there was no sadness, no feeling. His death was equal to everything else.

So you may say that when it comes to the death of a person I love, my controlled folly is to shift my eyes.

In other words a man of knowledge has no honor, no dignity, no family, no name, no country, but only life to be lived, and under those circumstances his only tie to his fellow men is his controlled folly. Thus a man of knowledge

endeavors, and sweats and puffs, and if one looks at him he is just like any ordinary man, except that the folly of his life is under control. Nothing being more important than anything else, a man of knowledge chooses any act, and acts it out as if it matters to him. His controlled folly makes him say that what he does matters and makes him act as if it did, and yet he knows that it doesn't; so when he fulfills his acts he retreats in peace, and whether his acts were good or bad, or worked or didn't, is in no way part of his concern.

A man of knowledge may choose, on the other hand, to remain totally impassive and never act, and behave as if to be impassive really matters to him, and he will be rightfully true at that too, because that would also be his controlled folly.

It's possible to insist, to properly insist, even though we know that what we're doing is useless. But we must know first that our acts are useless and yet we must proceed as if we didn't know it. That's a sorcerer's controlled folly.

A man of knowledge likes, that's all. He likes whatever or whoever he wants, but he uses his controlled folly to be unconcerned about it. The opposite of what you're doing now. To like or be liked by people is not all one can do as a man.

THE FOUR ENEMIES OF A MAN OF KNOWLEDGE

A man goes to knowledge as he goes to war, with fear, with respect and with absolute assurance. Going to knowledge or going to war in any other manner is a mistake and whoever makes it will live to regret his steps.

When a man has fulfilled those four requisites there are no mistakes for which he will have to account; under such conditions his acts lose the blundering quality of a fool's acts. If such a man fails, or suffers a defeat, he will have lost only a battle, and there will be no pitiful regrets over that.

A man of knowledge is one who has followed truthfully the hardships of learning, a man who has, without rushing or faltering, gone as far as he can in unraveling the secrets of power and knowledge.

Not anyone can become a man of knowledge. In order to become one a man must challenge and defeat his four natural enemies. Anybody who defeats them becomes a man of knowledge. Anyone can try to become a man of knowledge; very few men actually succeed, but that is only natural. The

enemies a man encounters on the path of learning to become a man of knowledge are truly formidable; most men succumb to them.

To be a man of knowledge has no permanence. One is never a man of knowledge, not really. Rather, one becomes a man of knowledge for a very brief instant, after defeating the four natural enemies.

When a man starts to learn he is never clear about his objectives. His purpose is faulty; his intent is vague. He hopes for rewards that will never materialize for he knows nothing of the hardships of learning.

He slowly begins to learn—bit by bit at first, then in big chunks. And his thoughts soon clash. What he learns is never what he pictured, or imagined, and so he begins to be afraid. Learning is never what one expects. Every step of learning is a new task, and the fear the man is experiencing begins to mount mercilessly. His purpose becomes a battlefield.

And thus he has stumbled upon the first of his natural enemies; fear! A terrible enemy—treacherous and difficult to overcome. It remains concealed at every turn of the way, prowling, waiting. And if the man, terrified in its presence, runs away, his enemy will have put an end to his quest.

He will never become a man of knowledge. He will perhaps be a bully, or a harmless, scared man; at any rate he will be a defeated man. His first enemy will have put an end to his cravings.

A man is defeated only when he no longer tries, and abandons himself. Once one of these enemies overpowers a man there is nothing he can do. If he gives in to fear he will never conquer it, because he will shy away from learning and never try again. But if he tries to learn for years in the midst of his fear, he will eventually conquer it because he will never have really abandoned himself to it.

He must not run away. He must defy his fear and, in spite of it he must take the next step in learning, and the next and the next. He must be fully afraid, and yet he must not stop. That is the rule; and a moment will come when his first enemy retreats.

The man begins to feel sure of himself. His intent becomes stronger, learning is no longer a terrifying task.

When this joyful moment comes, the man can say without hesitation that he has defeated his first natural enemy. It happens little by little, and yet the fear is vanquished suddenly, and fast.

By then a man knows his desires; he knows how to satisfy those desires. He can anticipate the new steps of learning, and a sharp clarity surrounds everything. The man feels nothing is concealed. And thus he has encountered his second enemy.

Once a man has vanquished fear, he is free from it for the rest of his life, because instead of fear he has acquired clarity—a clarity of mind which erases fear.

That clarity of mind which is so hard to obtain, dispels fear but also blinds. It forces the man never to doubt himself. It gives him the assurance he can do anything he pleases, for he sees clearly into everything. And he is courageous because he is clear, and he stops at nothing because he is clear. But all that is a mistake; it is like something incomplete. If the man yields to this make-believe power he has succumbed to his second enemy and will be patient when he should rush. And he will fumble with learning until he winds up incapable of learning anything more.

His second enemy has just stopped him cold from trying to become a man of knowledge; instead he may turn into a buoyant warrior, or a clown. Yet the clarity for which he has paid so dearly will never change to darkness and fear again. He will be clear as long as he lives, but he will no longer learn, or yearn for anything.

He must do what he did with fear; he must defy his clarity and use it only to see, and wait patiently and measure carefully before taking new steps; he must think above all, that his clarity was only a point before his eyes. And thus he will have overcome his second enemy, and will arrive at a position where nothing can harm him anymore. This will not be a mistake. It will not be only a point before his eyes. It will be true power.

He will know at this point that the power he has been pursuing for so long is finally his. He can do with it whatever pleases him. His ally is at his command. His wish is the rule. He sees all that is around him. But he has also come across his third enemy: Power!

Power is the strongest of all enemies. And naturally the easiest thing to do is give in; after all the man is truly invincible. He commands; he begins by taking calculated risks, and ends by making rules, because he is a master.

A man at this stage hardly notices his third enemy closing in on him. And suddenly, without knowing, he will certainly have lost the battle. His enemy will have turned him into a cruel, capricious man.

But he will never lose his clarity or his power.

He has to come to realize the power he has seemingly conquered is in reality never his. He must keep himself in line at all times, handling carefully and faithfully all that he has learned. If he can see that clarity and power, without his control over himself, are worse than mistakes, he will reach a point where everything is held in check. He will know when and how to use his power. And thus he will have defeated his third enemy.

The man will be, by then, at the end of his journey of learning, and almost without warning he will come upon the last of his enemies; Old age! This enemy is the cruelest of all, the one he won't be able to defeat completely, but only fight away.

This is the time when a man has no more fears, no more impatient clarity of mind—a time when all his power is in check, but also the time when he has an unyielding desire to rest. If he gives in totally to his desire to lie down and forget, if he soothes himself in tiredness, he will have lost his last round, and his enemy will cut him down into a feeble old creature. His desire to retreat will overrule all his clarity, his power and his knowledge.

But if the man sloughs off his tiredness, and lives his fate through, he can then be called a man of knowledge, if only for the brief moment when he succeeds in fighting off his last invincible enemy. That moment of clarity, power and knowledge is enough.

PROCEDURES

ERASING PERSONAL HISTORY

This is the little secret I'm going to give you today. Nobody knows my personal history. Nobody knows who I am or what I do. Not even I.

How can I know who I am, when I am all this?

One day I found out that personal history was no longer necessary for me, and, like drinking, I dropped it. One must first have the desire to drop it, and then one must proceed harmoniously to chop it off, little by little.

Smoking and drinking are nothing. Nothing at all if we want to drop them. People hardly ever realize that we can cut anything from our lives, any time, just like that.

Your trouble is that you have to explain everything to everybody, compulsively and at the same time you want to keep the freshness, the newness of what you do. You must renew your personal history by telling your parents, your relatives, and your friends everything you do. On the other hand, if you have no personal history, no explanations are needed; nobody is angry or disillusioned with your acts, and above all no one pins you down with their thoughts.

Your friends, those you have known for a long time. You must leave them quickly.

What's wrong is that once they know you, you are an affair taken for granted and from that moment on you won't be able to break the tie of their thoughts. I personally like the ultimate freedom of being unknown. No one knows me with steadfast certainty, the way people know you for instance.

It is best to erase all personal history, because that will make us free from the encumbering thoughts of other people.

When nothing is for sure we remain alert, perennially on our toes. It is more exciting not to know which bush the rabbit is hiding behind than to behave as though we know everything. From now on you must simply show people whatever you care to show them, but without ever telling exactly how you've done it.

You always knew how to lie. The only thing that was missing was that you didn't know why to do it. Now you do.

You see, we only have two alternatives; we either take everything for sure and real or we don't. If we follow the first, we end up bored to death with ourselves and with the world. If we follow the second and erase personal history, we create a fog around us, a very exciting and mysterious state in which nobody knows where the rabbit will pop out, not even ourselves

Little by little you must create a fog around yourself; you must erase everything around you until nothing can be taken for granted, until nothing is any longer for sure and real. Don't take things for granted. You must begin to erase yourself.

DEATH AS AN ADVISOR

The thing to do when you're impatient is to turn to your left and ask advice from your death. An immense amount of pettiness is dropped if your death makes a gesture to you, or if you catch a glimpse of it, or if you just have the feeling that your companion is watching you.

Death is our eternal companion. It is always to our left, at an arm's length. It has always been watching you. It always will until the day it taps you. A warrior thinks of his death when things become unclear, because the idea of death is the only thing that tempers our spirit. Your death gives you a little warning. It always comes as a chill.

Death is the only wise advisor that we have. Whenever you feel, as you always do, that everything is going wrong and you're about to be annihilated, turn to your death and ask if that is so. Your death will tell you that you're wrong; that nothing really matters outside its touch. Your death will tell you, "I haven't touched you yet."

The reason you keep on coming to see me is very simple. Every time you have seen me your body has learned certain things, even against your desire. And finally your body now needs to come back to see me to learn more. Let's say your body knows that it is going to die, even though you never think about it. So I've been telling your body that I too am going to die and before I do I would like to show your body certain things, things which you cannot give to your body yourself. For example your body needs

fright. It likes it. Your body needs the darkness and the wind. So let's say that your body returns to see me because I am its friend.

There is nothing wrong with being afraid. When you fear you see things in a different way. Fright never injures anyone. What injures the spirit is having someone always on your back, beating you, telling you what to do and what not to do.

By the time knowledge becomes a frightening affair the man also realizes that death is the irreplaceable partner that sits next to him on the mat. Every bit of knowledge that becomes power has death as its central force. Death lends the ultimate touch, and whatever is touched by death indeed becomes power.

A man who follows the paths of sorcery is confronted with imminent annihilation at every turn of the way, and unavoidably becomes keenly aware of his death. Without the awareness of death he would be only an ordinary man involved in ordinary acts. He would lack the necessary potency, the necessary concentration that transforms one's ordinary time on earth into magical power.

Thus to be a warrior a man has to be, first of all, and rightfully so, keenly aware of his own death. But to be concerned with death would force any one of us to focus on the self and that would be debilitating.

So the next thing one needs to be a warrior is detachment. The idea of imminent death, instead of becoming an obsession, becomes an indifference.

Only the idea of death makes a man sufficiently detached so he is incapable of abandoning himself to anything. Only the idea of death makes a man sufficiently detached so he can't deny himself anything. A man of that sort, however, does not crave, for he has acquired a silent lust for life and for all things of life. He knows his death is stalking him and won't give him time to cling to anything, so he tries, without craving, all of everything.

A detached man, who knows he has no possibility of fending off his death, has only one thing to back himself with; the power of his decisions. He has to be, so to speak, the master of his choices. He must fully understand that his choice is his responsibility and once he makes it there is no longer time for regrets or recriminations. His decisions are final, simply because his death will not permit him time to cling to anything.

Nothing is pending in the world. Nothing is finished, yet nothing is resolved.

And thus with an awareness of his death, with his detachment, and with the power of his decisions a warrior sets his life in a strategical manner. The knowledge of his death guides him and makes him detached and silently lusty; the power of his final decisions makes him able to choose without regrets and what he chooses is always strategically the best; and so he perform everything he has to with gusto and lusty efficiency.

The indulgence of denying is by far the worst; it forces us to believe we are doing great things, when in effect we are only fixed within ourselves.

You should not have any remorse for anything you have done, because to isolate one's acts as being mean, or ugly, or evil is to place an unwarranted importance on the self.

Look at me. I have no doubts or remorse. Everything I do is my decision and my responsibility. The simplest thing I do, to take you for a walk in the desert, for instance, may very well mean my death. Death is stalking me. Therefore, I have no room for doubts or remorse. If I have to die as a result of taking you for a walk, then I must die.

You, on the other hand, feel that you are immortal, and the decisions of an immortal man can be canceled or regretted or doubted. In a world where death is the hunter, my friend there is not time for regrets or doubts. There is only time for decisions.

When a man behaves in such a manner one may rightfully say that he is a warrior and has acquired patience.

Death is not like a person. It is rather a presence. But one may also choose to say that it is nothing and yet it is everything. One will be right on every count. Death is whatever one wishes.

I am at ease with people, so death is a person for me. I am also given to mysteries, so death has hollow eyes for me. I can look through them. They are like two windows, and yet they move. And so I can say that death with its hollow eyes looks at a warrior while he dances for the last time on earth.

It is the same for every warrior that has a dance of power and yet it is not. Death witnesses a warrior's last dance, but the manner in which a warrior sees his death is a personal matter. It could be anything—a bird, a light, a person, a bush, a pebble, a piece of fog or an unknown presence.

Death has two stages. The first is a blackout. It is a meaningless stage, in which one experiences a lightness that makes one feel happy, complete and that everything in the world is at ease. But that is only a shallow state; it soon vanishes and one enters a new realm, a realm of harshness and power. The second is the real stage where one meets with death; it is a brief moment, after the first blackout, when we find that we are somehow ourselves again. It is then that death smashes against us with quiet fury and power until it dissolves our lives into nothing.

Death enters through the belly. Right through the gap of the will. That area is the most important and sensitive part of a man. It is the area of the will and also the area through which all of us die. I know it because my ally has guided me to that stage.

A sorcerer tunes his will by letting death overtake him, and when he is flat and begins to expand, his impeccable will takes over and assembles the fog into one person again.

It is his will which assembles a sorcerer, but as his old age makes him feeble his will wanes and a moment inevitably comes when he is no longer capable of commanding his will. He then has nothing with which to oppose the silent force of his death, and his life becomes like the lives of all his fellow men, an expanding fog moving beyond its limits.

Our death is waiting and this very act we're performing now may well be our last battle on earth. I call it a battle because it is a struggle. Most people move from act to act without any struggle or thought. A hunter, on the contrary assesses every act; and since he has an intimate knowledge of his death, he proceeds judiciously, as if every act were his last battle. Only a fool would fail to notice the advantage a hunter has over his fellow men. A hunter gives his last battle its due respect. It's only natural that his last act on earth should be the best of himself. It's pleasurable that way. It dulls the edge of his fright.

If you are going to die there is no time for timidity, simply because timidity makes you cling to something that exists only in your thoughts. It soothes you while everything is at a lull. But then the awesome mysterious world will open its mouth for you, as it will open for every one of us, and then you will realize that your sure ways were not sure at all. Being timid prevents us from examining and exploiting our lot as men.

Acts have power, and especially when the person acting knows that those acts are his last battle. There is a strange consuming happiness in acting

with the full knowledge that whatever one is doing may very well be one's last act on earth. I recommend that you reconsider your life and bring your acts into that light.

Your continuity only makes you timid. Your acts cannot possibly have the flair, the power, the compelling force of the acts performed by a man who knows that he is fighting his last battle on earth. In other words your continuity does not make you happy or powerful.

Focus your attention on the link between you and your death, without remorse or sadness or worrying. Focus your attention on the fact you don't have time and let your acts flow accordingly. Let each of your acts be your last battle on earth. Only under those conditions will your acts have their rightful power. Otherwise they will be, for as long as you live, the acts of a timid man.

This, whatever you're doing now, may be your last battle on earth. It may very well be your last battle. There is no power which could guarantee that you are going to live one more minute.

If you do not think of your death, your entire life will be only personal chaos.

What else can a man have, except his life and his death?

LOSING SELF-IMPORTANCE

You take yourself too seriously. You are too damn important in your own mind. That must be changed! You are so goddamn important that you feel justified to be annoyed with everything. You're so damn important that you can afford to leave if things don't go your way. I suppose you think that shows you have character. That's nonsense! You're weak and conceited.

Self-importance is another thing that must be dropped, just like personal history.

As long as you feel that you are the most important thing in the world you cannot really appreciate the world around you. You are like a horse with blinders. All you see is yourself apart from everything else.

From now on talk to the little plants. Talk to them until you lose all sense of importance. Talk to them until you can do it in front of others. The world around us is a mystery, and men are no better than anything else. If a little

plant is generous with us we must thank her, or perhaps she will not let us go. Plants are very peculiar things. They are alive and they feel. You must talk to the plants before you pick them.

In order to see the plants you must talk to them personally. You must get to know them individually; then the plants can tell you anything you want to know about them.

You must talk to them in a loud and clear voice if you want them to answer you.

It doesn't matter what you say to a plant. You can just as well make up words; what's important is the feeling of liking it and treating it as an equal. A man who gathers plants must apologize every time for taking them and must assure them that someday his own body will serve as food for them.

So, all in all, the plants and ourselves are even. Neither we nor they are more or less important.

Come on, talk to the little plant. Tell it that you don't feel important anymore.

ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY FOR ONE'S ACTS

One must assume responsibility for being in a weird world. We are in a weird world, you know.

For you the world is weird because if you're not bored with it you're at odds with it. For me the world is weird because it is stupendous, awesome, mysterious, unfathomable; my interest has been to convince you that you must assume responsibility for being here, in this marvelous world, in this marvelous desert, in this marvelous time. I wanted to convince you that you must learn to make every act count, since you are going to be here for only a short while, in fact too short for witnessing all the marvels of it.

When a man decides to do something he must go all the way, but he must know first why he is doing it, and then he must proceed with his actions without having doubts or remorse about them.

In a world where death is the hunter, my friend, there is not time for regrets or doubts. There is only time for decisions.

It doesn't matter what the decision is. Nothing could be more or less serious than anything else. Don't you see? In a world where death is the hunter there are no big or small decisions. There are only decisions that we make in the face of our inevitable death.

To assume the responsibility of one's decisions means that one is ready to die for them.

You may go to any place you wish, but if you do, you must assume the full responsibility for that act. A warrior lives his life strategically. He would attend a party or reunion, for instance, only if his strategy calls for it. That means, of course, that he would be in total control and would perform all the acts that he deems necessary.

When he acts with his fellow men a warrior follows the doing of strategy, and in that doing there are no victories or defeats. In that doing there are only actions.

STOPPING THE WORLD

I'll tell you what we talk to ourselves about. We talk about our world. In fact we maintain our world with our internal talk.

Whenever the dialogue stops, the world collapses and extraordinary facets of ourselves surface, as though they had been kept heavily guarded by our words. You are like you are because you tell yourself that you are that way.

A warrior is aware that the world will change as soon as he stops talking to himself, and he must be prepared for that monumental jolt.

The world is such-and-such or so-and-so only because we tell ourselves that that is the way it is. If we stop telling ourselves that the world is so-and-so, the world would stop being so-and-so. At this moment I don't think you're ready for such a momentous blow, therefore you must start slowly to undo the world.

Whenever we finish talking to ourselves the world is always as it should be. We renew it, we kindle it with life, we uphold it with our internal talk. Not only that, but we also choose our paths as we talk to ourselves. Thus we repeat the same choices over and over until the day we die, because we keep on repeating the same internal talk.

To change your idea of the world is the crux of sorcery, and stopping the internal dialogue is the only way to accomplish it. The rest is just padding. Now you're in the position to know that nothing of what you've seen or done, with the exception of stopping the internal dialogue, could, by itself, have changed anything in you, or in your idea of the world. The provision is, of course, that that change should not be deranged. Now you can understand why a teacher doesn't clamp down on his apprentice. That would only breed obsession and morbidity.

The change I'm talking about never takes place by degrees; it happens suddenly. And you are not preparing yourself for that sudden act that will bring a total change.

The world is a mystery. This, what you're looking at is not all there is to it. There is much more to the world, so much more, in fact, that it is endless. So when you're trying to figure it out, all you're really doing is trying to make the world familiar. You and I are right here, in the world that you call real, simply because we both know it. You don't know the world of power, therefore you cannot make it into a familiar scene.

I'm like you. I didn't want it. I couldn't find a reason to have it. I had all the doubts that you have and never followed the instructions I was given, or I never thought I did; yet in spite of my stupidity I stored enough power, and one day my personal power made the world collapse.

And once you know what it's like to stop the world you realize there is a reason for it. You see, one of the arts of the warrior is to collapse the world for a specific reason and then restore it again in order to keep on living.

SETTING UP DREAMING

Become accessible to power; tackle your dreams. You call them dreams because you have no power. A warrior, being a man who seeks power, doesn't call them dreams, he calls them real.

What you call dreams are real for a warrior. You must understand that a warrior is not a fool. A warrior is an immaculate hunter who hunts power; he's not drunk or crazed, and he has neither the time nor the disposition to bluff, or to lie to himself, or to make a wrong move. The stakes are too high for that. The stakes are his trimmed orderly life which he has taken so long to tighten and perfect. He is not going to throw that away by making some stupid miscalculation, by taking something for being something else.

Dreaming is real for a warrior because in it he can act deliberately, he can choose and reject, he can select from a variety of items those which lead to power, and then he can manipulate them and use them, while in an ordinary dream he cannot act deliberately.

In dreaming you have power; you can change things you may find out countless concealed facts; you can control whatever you want.

You must start by doing something very simple. Tonight in your dreams you must look at your hands.

You can, of course, look at whatever you goddam please—your toes, or your belly, or your pecker, for that matter. I said your hands because that was the easiest thing for me to look at. Don't think it's a joke. Dreaming is as serious as seeing or dying, or any other thing in this awesome, mysterious world.

Every time you look at anything in your dreams it changes shape. The trick in learning to set up dreaming is obviously not just to look at things but to sustain the sight of them. Dreaming is real when one has succeeded in bringing everything into focus. Then there is no difference between what you do when you sleep and what you do when you are not sleeping. Do you see what I mean?

When they begin to change shape you must move your sight away from them and pick something else, and then look at your hands again. It takes a long time to perfect this technique.

Every time you look at your hands you renew the power needed for dreaming, so in the beginning don't look at too many things. Four items will suffice every time. Later on you may enlarge the scope until you can cover all you want, but as soon as the images begin to shift and you feel you are losing control go back to your hands.

When you feel you can gaze at things indefinitely you will be ready for a new technique. I'm going to teach you this new technique now, but I expect you to put to use only when you are ready.

The next step in setting up dreaming is to learn to travel. The same way you have learned to look at your hands you can will yourself to move, to go places. First you have to establish a place you want to go. Pick a well-known

spot—perhaps your school, or a park, a friend’s house—then will yourself to go there.

This technique is very difficult. You must perform two tasks: You must will yourself to go to the specific locale, and then, when you have mastered that technique, you have to learn to control the exact time of your traveling.

Each warrior has his own way of dreaming. Each way is different. The only thing which we all have in common is that we play tricks in order to force ourselves to abandon the quest. The countermeasure is to persist in spite of all the barriers and disappointments.

The sorcerer’s explanation of how to select a topic for dreaming, is that a warrior chooses the topic by deliberately holding an image in his mind while he shuts off his internal dialogue. In other words, if he is capable of not talking to himself for a moment and then holds the image or the thought of what he wants in dreaming, even if only for an instant, then the desired topic will come to him, I’m sure you’ve done that, although you were not aware of it.

You must wear a headband to sleep. Getting a headband is a tricky maneuver. I cannot give you one, because you yourself have to make it from scratch.

But you cannot make one until you have had a vision of it in dreaming. See what I mean? The headband has to be made according to the specific vision. And it must have a strip across it that fits tightly to the top of the head. Or it may very well be like a tight cap. Dreaming is easy when one wears a power object on top of the head. You could wear a cap or put on a cowl, like a friar, and go to sleep, but those items would only cause intense dreams. Not dreaming.

The vision of the headband does not have to occur only in dreaming. It can happen in states of wakefulness and as a result of any far-fetched and totally unrelated event, such as watching the flight of birds, the movement of water, the clouds, and so on.

A hunter of power watches everything, and everything tells him some secret.

NOT-DOING

Not-doing is so difficult and so powerful that you should not mention it. Not until you have stopped the world; only then can one talk about it freely, if that's what you want to do.

Take that rock, for instance. To look at it is doing, but to see it is not-doing.

That rock is a rock because of all the things you know how to do to it. I call that doing. A man of knowledge, for instance, knows that the rock is a rock only because of doing, so if he doesn't want the rock to be a rock all he has to do is not-doing. See what I mean?

I say that you are making this into a pebble because you know the doing involved in it. Now, in order to stop the world you must stop doing.

In the case of this little rock the first thing which doing does to it is to shrink it to this size. So the proper thing to do, which a warrior does if he wants to stop the world, is to enlarge a little rock or any other thing, by not-doing.

You've been watching it for a long time. It has something of you now. A warrior always tries to affect the force of doing by changing it into not-doing. Doing would be to leave the pebble lying around because it is merely a small rock. Not-doing would be to proceed with that pebble as if it were something far beyond a mere rock. In this case, that pebble has soaked in you for a long time and now it is you, and as such, you cannot leave it lying around, but must bury it. If you would have personal power, however, not-doing would be to change that pebble into a power object.

I have to tell you that it really doesn't matter whether or not all this is true. It is here that a warrior has a point of advantage over the average man. An average man cares that things are either true or false, but a warrior doesn't. An average man proceeds in a specific way with things that he knows are true, he acts and believe in what he does. But if things are said to be untrue, he doesn't care to act, or he doesn't believe in what he does.

A warrior, on the other hand, acts in both instances. If things are said to be true, he would act in order to do doing. If things are said to be untrue, he still would act in order to do not-doing. See what I mean?

The most difficult part about the warrior's way is to realize that the world is a feeling. When one is not-doing, one is feeling the world, and one feels the world through its lines. You must feel everything, otherwise the world loses its sense.

Not-doing is very simple, but very difficult. It is not a matter of understanding but of mastering it. Seeing, of course, is the final accomplishment of a man of knowledge, and seeing is attained only when one has stopped the world through the technique of not-doing.

When one does something with people the concern should be only with presenting the case to their bodies. That's what I've been doing with you so far, letting your body know. Who cares whether or not you understand?

Find a bush. Fix your attention not on the leaves, but on the shadows of the leaves.

Shadows are like the doors of not-doing. A man of knowledge, for example, can tell the innermost feelings of men by watching their shadows.

You may say there is movement in them, or you may say that the lines of the world are shown in them, or you may say that feelings come from them. To believe that shadows are just shadows is doing. That belief is somehow stupid. Think about it this way; there is so much more to everything in the world that obviously there must be more to shadows too. After all what makes them shadows is our doing.

In observing shadows one has to cross the eyes and yet keep a sharp image in focus. The idea is to let one shadow be superimposed on the other by crossing the eyes. Through that process one can ascertain a certain feeling which emanates from shadows. There is really no way of describing what I mean.

Dreaming is the not-doing of dreams, and as you progress in your not-doing you will also progress in dreaming. The trick is not to stop looking for your hands, even if you don't believe what you're doing has any meaning. In fact, as I have told you before, a warrior doesn't need to believe, because as long as he keeps acting without believing he is not-doing.

During the day shadows are the doors of not-doing. But at night, since very little doing prevails in the dark, everything is a shadow, including the allies.

Everything I have taught you so far has been an aspect of not-doing. A warrior applies not-doing to everything in the world, and yet I can't tell you more about it than what I have said today. You must let your own body discover the power and feeling of not-doing.

I already know you think you are rotten. That's your doing. Now in order to affect that doing I am going to recommend that you learn another doing. From now on, and for a period of eight days, I want you to lie to yourself. Instead of telling yourself the truth, that you are ugly and rotten and inadequate, you will tell yourself that you are the complete opposite, knowing that you are lying and that you are absolutely beyond hope.

It may hook you into another doing, and then you may realize that both doings are lies, unreal, that to hinge yourself to either one is a waste of time, because the only thing that is real is the being in you that is going to die. To arrive at that being is the not-doing of the self.

Everything we do, as I have told you, is a matter of doing. A man of knowledge could hook himself to everyone's doing and come up with weird things. But they are not weird, not really. They are weird only to those who are trapped in doing.

Let's say that when every one of us is born we bring with us a little ring of power. That little ring is almost immediately put to use. So every one of us is already hooked from birth and our rings of power are joined to everyone else's. In other words, our rings of power are hooked to the doing of the world in order to make the world.

We are perceivers. The world that we perceive, though, is an illusion. It was created by a description that was told to us since the moment we were born.

We, the luminous beings, are born with two rings of power, but we use only one to create the world. That ring, which is hooked very soon after we are born, is reason, and its companion is talking. Between the two they concoct and maintain the world.

So, in essence, the world that your reason wants to sustain is the world created by a description and its dogmatic and inviolable rules, which reason learns to accept and defend.

For instance, our rings of power, yours and mine, are hooked right now to the doing of this room. Our rings of power are spinning this room into being at this very moment.

You see, every one of us knows the doing of rooms because, in one way or another, we have spent much of our lives in rooms. A man of knowledge, on the other hand, develops another ring of power. I would call it the ring of

not-doing, because it is hooked to not-doing. With that ring, therefore, he can spin another world.

Your difficulty is that you haven't developed your extra ring of power and your body doesn't know not-doing.

We have all been taught to agree about doing. You don't have any idea of the power that that agreement brings with it. But, fortunately, not-doing is equally miraculous and powerful.

If you want to know what I mean by not-doing you have to do a simple exercise. Since we are concerned with not-doing it doesn't matter whether you do the exercise now or ten years from now.

Lie down. Bend your right arm at the elbow, then turn your hand until the palm is facing the front; curve your fingers so your hand looks as if it is holding a doorknob, and then begin to move your arm back and forth in a circular motion like the act of pushing and pulling a lever attached to a wheel.

A warrior does that movement every time he wants to push something out of his body, something like a disease or an unwelcoming feeling. The idea is to push and pull an imaginary opposing force until one feels a heavy object, a solid body, stopping the free movement of the hand. In the case of this exercise not-doing consists in repeating it until one feels the heavy body with the hand in spite of the fact that you can never believe it is possible to feel it.

Not-doing is only for very strong warriors and you don't have the power to deal with it yet. Now you will only trap horrendous things with your hand. So do it little by little, until your hand doesn't get cold anymore. Whenever your hand remains warm you can actually feel the lines of the world with it.

The most durable lines a man of knowledge produces come from the middle of the body. But he can also make them with his eyes or with his hands.

Let's say that you can feel them. The most difficult part about the warrior's way is to realize that the world is a feeling. When one is not-doing one is feeling the world, and one feels the world through its lines.

There are infinite numbers of lines that join us to things. The exercise of not-doing I have just described will help anyone to feel a line that comes out from the moving hand, a line that one can place or cast wherever one wants

to. This is only an exercise, because the lines formed by the hand are not durable enough to be of real value in a practical situation.

Look at the shadow of that boulder. The shadow is the boulder, and yet it isn't. To observe the boulder in order to know what the boulder is, is doing, but to observe its shadow is not-doing.

The secret of a strong body is not in what you do to it but what you don't do. Sit here until we leave and not-do.

THE ALLIES

An ally is a power a man can bring into his life to help him, to advise him, and give him the strength necessary to perform acts, whether big or small, right or wrong. This ally is necessary to enhance a man's life, guide his acts, and further his knowledge. In fact, an ally is the indispensable aid to knowing.

The allies are neither good nor evil, but are put to use by the sorcerers for whatever purpose they see fit. An ally will make you see and understand things about which no human being could possibly enlighten you.

An ally is a power capable of carrying a man beyond the boundaries of himself. This is how an ally can reveal matters no human being could. An ally takes you out to give you power.

The way one understands the ally is a personal matter. The only way to know what an ally is is by experiencing it. Over the years I have struggled to prepare you for the momentous encounter with an ally. A teacher must acquaint his disciple with ally little by little, piece by piece.

Our reason is petty and it is always at odds with our body. This, of course, is only a way of talking, but the triumph of a man of knowledge is that he has joined the two together. Since you're not a man of knowledge, your body does things now that your reason does not comprehend. The ally is one of those things.

The ally is waiting for you. That's for sure. It is right here, or there, or any other place. The ally is waiting for you, just like death is waiting for you, everywhere and nowhere. For the same reason that death waits for you, because you were born. There is no possibility of explaining at this point

what is meant by that. You must first experience the ally. You must perceive it in its full force, then the sorcerer's explanation may throw light on it.

Everything they do is significant. From their actions a brujo can sometimes draw his power. Even if a brujo does not have an ally of his own, as long as he knows how to see, he can handle power by watching the acts of the allies. My benefactor taught me to do that, and for years before I had my own ally I watched for allies among crowds of people and every time I saw one it taught me something.

I like to sit in parks and bus depots and watch. Sometimes I can spot an ally right away; at other times I can see only real people. Once I saw two allies sitting in a bus, side by side. That's the only time in my life I have seen two together.

Real people look like luminous eggs when you see them. Nonpeople always look like people. That's what I meant when I said you cannot see an ally. The allies take different forms. They look like dogs, coyotes, birds, even tumbleweeds, or anything else, but the allies can be seen only in the form they are portraying. That form is good enough to fool the eyes; our eyes that is. A dog is never fooled, neither is a crow.

In the company of men they behave like men. In the company of animals they behave like animals. Animals are usually afraid of them; however if they are accustomed to seeing the allies they leave them alone. We ourselves do something similar. We have scores of allies among us, but we don't bother them. Since our eyes can only look at things we don't notice them.

A man who wishes to find one of these beings has to travel far and go by himself. At a distant and lonely place the man has to take all the necessary steps alone.

You must determine the right direction immediately upon arriving at the top of a hill. As soon as you are on the top, face your good direction. You should always face it, especially when you're in trouble. Remember that.

As soon as you reach the hilltop you have to extend your right arm in front of you with the palm of your hand down and your fingers stretched out like a fan, except for the thumb, which has to be tucked against the palm. Next you have to turn your head to the north and fold your arm over your chest, pointing your hand also to the north; then dance, putting your left foot behind the right one, beating the ground with the tip of your left toes. When

you feel a warmth coming up your left leg begin sweeping your arm slowly from north to south and then to the north again.

The spot over which the palm of your hand feels warm as you sweep your arm is the place where you must sit, and it is also the direction in which you must look. If the spot is toward the east, or in your good direction, the results will be excellent. If the spot where your hand gets warm is toward the north you will take a bad beating but you may turn the tide in your favor. If the spot is toward the south you will have a hard fight.

Now if your hand does not get warm at all while you sweep it, face the east again and run in an easterly direction until you are out of breath. Stop there and repeat the same maneuvers. You must keep on running toward the east, repeating these movements until your hand gets warm.

You will need to sweep your arm up to four times at first, but as you become more familiar with the movement you will need only one single sweep to know whether or not your hand is going to get warm.

Once you establish a spot where your hand gets warm, sit there; that is your first point. If you are facing the south or the north, you have to make up your mind whether you feel strong enough to stay. If you have doubts about yourself, get up and leave. There is no need to stay if you are not confident. If you decide to stick around clear an area big enough to build a fire about five feet away from your first point. The fire must be in a straight line to the direction you are looking. The area where you build the fire is your second point. Then gather all the twigs you can in between those two points and make a fire. Sit on your first point and look at the fire. Sooner or later the spirit will come and you will see it.

You have to sit by the fire and if you see the shadow you have to leave immediately. You have to remain, however, if you encounter other conditions, such as a strong wind that would kill your fire and would keep you from kindling it again during four attempts; or if a branch breaks from a nearby tree. The branch really has to break and you have to make sure that it is not merely the sound of a branch breaking off.

Other conditions you have to be aware of are rocks that roll, or pebbles which are thrown at your fire, or any constant noise, and you then have to walk in the direction in which any of these phenomena occur until the spirit reveals itself.

If your hand does not get warm at all after four sweeping movements, sweep your arm slowly from north to south and then turn around and sweep it to the west. If your hand gets warm on any place toward the west, drop everything and run. Run downhill toward the flat area, and no matter what you hear or feel behind you, don't turn around. As soon as you get to the flat area, no matter how frightened you are, don't keep on running. Drop to the ground, take off your jacket, bunch it around your navel, and curl up like a ball, tucking your knees against your stomach. You must also cover your eyes with your hands, and your arms have to remain tight against your thighs. You must stay in that position until morning. If you follow these simple steps no harm will ever come to you.

In case you cannot get to the flat area in time, drop to the ground right where you are. You will have a horrid time there. You will be harassed, but if you keep calm and don't move or look you will come out of it without a single scratch.

There are many ways in which such a being puts a warrior to the test. It might suddenly leap in front of you in the most horrendous appearance, or it might grab you from the back and not turn you loose and keep you pinned down for hours. It might also topple a tree on you. These are truly dangerous forces, and although they cannot kill a man hand to hand, they can cause his death by fright, or by actually letting objects fall on him, or by appearing suddenly and causing him to stumble, lose his footing, and go over a precipice.

If you ever find one of these beings under inappropriate circumstances you should never attempt to struggle with it because it will kill you. It will rob your soul. So you should throw yourself to the ground and bear it until morning.

When a man is facing the ally, the giver of secrets, he has to muster up all his courage and grab it before it grabs him, or chase it before it chases him. The chase must be relentless and then comes the struggle. The man must wrestle the spirit to the ground and keep it there until it gives him power.

When one struggles with them they are solid, but that feeling lasts only a moment. Those beings rely on a man's fear, therefore if the man struggling with one of them is a warrior, the being loses its tension very quickly while the man becomes more vigorous. One can actually absorb the spirit's tension.

That tension is power. When one touches them, they vibrate as if they were ready to rip one apart. But that is only a show. The tension ends when the man maintains his grip. They become flaccid. They still have substance though. But it is not like anything one has ever touched.

A warrior allows the ally to come to him only when he is good and ready. When he is strong enough to grapple with the ally he opens his gap and lurches out, grabs the ally, keeps him pinned down and maintains his stare on him for exactly the time he has to, then he moves his eyes away and releases the ally and lets him go. A warrior, my little friend is the master at all times.

To meet an ally without being prepared is like attacking a lion with your farts.

FINDING YOUR SPOT

In order to find the proper place to rest, all you have to do is cross your eyes. One can feel with the eyes when the eyes are not looking right into things.

They are not sights proper. If you look at a bush or a tree or a rock where you may like to rest, your eyes can make you feel whether or not that's the best resting place.

Once you learn to separate the images and see two of everything, you must focus your attention in the area between the two images. Any change worthy of notice will take place there, in that area.

While you remain rooted in your "good spot" nothing can cause you bodily harm, because you have the assurance that at that spot you are at your very best. If I were there and told you where the spot was you would never have the confidence needed to claim it as true knowledge. Thus, knowledge is indeed power.

There is also a bad spot, called the enemy. These two places are the key to a man's well-being, especially for a man who is pursuing knowledge. The sheer act of sitting on one's spot creates superior strength; on the other hand, the enemy weakens a man and can even cause his death.

THE RIGHT WAY OF WALKING

Curl your fingers gently as you walk so as to keep your attention on the trail and the surroundings. One should never carry anything in the hands. If things have to be carried one should use a knapsack or shoulder bag. Then look, without focusing the eyes, at any point directly in front of you on the arc that starts at the tip of your feet and ends above the horizon,

LISTENING TO THE SOUNDS OF THE WORLD

First of all you must use your ears to take some of the burden from your eyes. We have been using our eyes to judge the world since the time we were born. We talk to others and to ourselves mainly about what we see. A warrior is aware of that and listens to the world; he listens to the sounds of the world.

Everything is meaningful for a warrior. The sounds have holes in them and so does everything around you. Ordinarily a man does not have the speed to catch the holes, and thus he goes through life without protection. The worms, the birds, the trees, all of them can tell us unimaginable things if only one could have the speed to grasp their message. But we must be on good terms with all the living things of this world. This is the reason why we must talk to plants we are about to kill and apologize for hurting them; the same thing must be done with the animals we're going to hunt. We should take only enough for our needs, otherwise the plants and the animals and the worms we have killed would turn against us and cause us disease and misfortune. A warrior is aware of this and strives to appease them, so when he peers through the holes, the trees and birds and worms give him truthful messages.

THE GAIT OF POWER

Bend slightly at the waist but keep your spine straight, and then, raising the knees almost to the chest, run in total darkness. The key is to let one's personal power flow out freely so it can merge with the power of the night, and once that power takes over there is no chance for a slip-up.

First, curl your fingers against your palms, stretching out the thumb and index of each hand. To feel inadequate at this point is an indulgence since you can always see fairly well no matter how dark the night is, if you do not focus on anything, but keep scanning the ground right in front of you. The gait of power is similar to finding the spot Both entail a sense of abandon

and a sense of trust, The gait of Power requires that one keep the eyes on the ground directly in front, because even a glance to either side will produce an alteration in the flow of movement. Bending the trunk forward is necessary in order to lower the eyes, and the reason for lifting the knees up to the chest is because the steps have to be very short and safe. You will stumble a great deal at first, but with practice, you can run as swiftly and as safely as you can in the daytime.

IN MOMENTS OF FEAR OR DISTRESS

In moments of great danger, fear or distress push the diaphragm down while taking four sharp gasps of air through the mouth, followed by four deep inhalations and exhalations through the nose. The gasps of air have to be felt as jolts in the middle part of the body. Keep the hands tightly clasped, covering the navel, to give strength to the midsection and help control the gasps and deep inhalations, which have to be held for a count of eight as one presses the diaphragm down. The exhalations are done twice through the nose and twice through the mouth, in a slow or accelerated fashion, depending on one's preference.

STOPPING OUR FELLOW MEN

If one wants to stop our fellow men one must always be outside the circle that presses them. That way one can always direct the pressure.

CONFRONTING HUMAN BEINGS

If you were a warrior you would know that the worst thing one can do is confront human beings directly.

NOTHING

Nothing in the life of a sorcerer is made of anything else. If something is anything at all, it is the thing itself.

THE WARRIOR'S GAZE

The warrior's gaze is placed on the right eye of the other person, and what it does is stop the internal dialogue; thus the danger of the maneuver. Even if it is only for an instant, there is no way of describing the feeling that the body experiences.

The gaze on the right eye is not a stare. It is rather a forceful grabbing that one does through the eye of the other person. In other words, one grabs something that is behind the eye. One has the actual physical sensation that one is holding something with the will.

This is naturally, only a way of talking, a way of explaining weird physical sensations.

There's no way of exactly describing what one does. Something snaps forward from someplace below the stomach; that something has direction and can be focused on anything.

It works only when the warrior learns to focus his will. There's no way of practicing it, therefore I have not recommended or encouraged its use. At a given moment in the life of a warrior it simply happens. No one knows why.

THE FIGHTING FORM

The fighting form is a specific bodily position to be maintained while you remain at your beneficial spot. It consists of slapping the calf and thigh of the right leg and stomping your left foot in a kind of dance you have to do while facing the attacker,

Under circumstances of extreme danger hurl an object at the enemy. Ordinarily one will use a power object, but if you possess none use any small rock that will fit into the palm of your right hand, a rock you can hold by pressing it against your palm with your thumb.

The hurling of the object has to be accompanied by a war cry, a yell that has the property of directing the object to its mark. Be careful and deliberate about the outcry and do not use it at random, but only under severe conditions of seriousness.

The outcry or war cry is something that remains with a man for the duration of his life, thus it has to be good from the very beginning. The only way to start it correctly is by holding back one's natural fear and haste until one is absolutely filled with power, and then the yell will burst out with direction

and power. The power is something that runs through the body coming from the ground where one stands. It is a kind of power that emanates from the beneficial spot, to be exact. It is a force that pushes the yell out. If such a force is properly managed the battle cry will be perfect.

THE CUBIC CENTIMETER OF CHANCE

There is something you ought to be aware of by now. I call it the cubic centimeter of chance. All of us, whether or not we are warriors, have a cubic centimeter of chance that pops out in front of our eyes from time to time. The difference between an average man and a warrior is that the warrior is aware of this, and one of his tasks is to be alert, deliberately waiting, so that when his cubic centimeter of chance pops out he has the necessary speed, the prowess to pick it up.

Chance, good luck, personal power, or whatever you may call it, is a peculiar state of affairs. It is like a very small stick that comes out in front of us and invites us to pluck it. Usually we are too busy, or too preoccupied, or just too stupid and lazy to realize that that is our cubic centimeter of luck. A warrior, on the other hand, is always alert and tight and has the spring, the gumption necessary to grab it.

PLACE OF PREDILECTION

Every warrior has a place to die. A place of his predilection which is soaked with unforgettable memories, where powerful events have left their mark, a place where he has witnessed marvels, where secrets have been revealed to him, a place where he has stored his personal power. A warrior has the obligation to go back to that place of his predilection every time he taps power in order to store it there. He either goes there by means of walking or by means of dreaming.

SEEING HUMAN BEINGS

You should relax, shut off the internal dialogue and let go, merging with the person being observed.

There is no way to explain what that means; it is something that the body feels or does when put in observational contact with other bodies. In the past I have called that process seeing. It consists of a lull of true silence

within followed by an outward elongation of something in the self, an elongation that meets and merges with the other body, or with anything within one's field of awareness.

SEEING PEOPLE WHO AREN'T PRESENT

First you must stop your internal dialogue, then you must bring up the image of the person that you want to see; any thought that one holds in mind in a state of silence is properly a command, since there are no other thoughts to compete with it.

EXPLANATION

THE TOTALITY OF ONESELF

I will say to you that what matters to a warrior is arriving at the totality of oneself.

You are at a very poignant crossroad. Perhaps the last one, and also perhaps the most difficult to understand. Some of the things I am going to point out to you today will probably never be clear. They are not supposed to be clear anyway. So don't be embarrassed or discouraged. All of us are dumb creatures when we join the world of sorcery, and to join it doesn't in any sense insure us that we will change. Some of us remain dumb until the very end.

Don't fret if you don't make sense out of what I'm going to tell you. Considering your temperament, I'm afraid that you might knock yourself out trying to understand. Don't! What I'm about to say is meant only to point out a direction.

I'm going to tell you about the tonal (toe-nahl) and the nagual (nah-wahl).

This time I need your undivided attention, since I am going to acquaint you with the tonal and the nagual. Sorcerers have a special and unique interest in that knowledge. I would say that the tonal and the nagual are in the realm of men of knowledge. In your case, this is the lid that closes everything I have taught you. Thus, I have waited until now to talk about them.

The tonal is the organizer of the world. Perhaps the best way of describing its monumental work is to say that on its shoulders rests the task of setting the chaos of the world in order. It is not farfetched to maintain, as sorcerers do, that everything we know and do as men is the work of the tonal.

At this moment, for instance, what is engaged in trying to make sense out of our conversation is your tonal; without it there would be only weird sounds and grimaces and you wouldn't understand a thing of what I'm saying.

I would say then that the tonal is a guardian that protects something priceless, our very being. Therefore an inherent quality of the tonal is to be cagey and jealous of its doings. And since its doings are by far the most

important part of our lives it is no wonder that it eventually changes, in everyone of us, from a guardian into a guard.

A guardian is broadminded and understanding. A guard, on the other hand, is a vigilante, narrow-minded and most of the time despotic. I say, then, that the tonal in all of us has been made into a petty and despotic guard when it should be a broadminded guardian.

The tonal is everything we are. Name it! Anything we have a word for is the tonal. And since the tonal is its own doings, then everything, obviously, has to fall under its domain.

The tonal is everything we know. I think this in itself is enough reason for the tonal to be such an overpowering affair.

The tonal is everything we know. And that includes not only us, as persons, but everything in our world. It can be said that the tonal is everything that meets the eye.

We begin to groom it at the moment of our birth. The moment we take the first gasp of air we also breathe in power for the tonal. So, it is proper to say that the tonal of a human being is intimately tied to his birth.

You must remember this point. It is of great importance in understanding all this. The tonal begins at birth and ends at death.

The tonal makes the world only in a manner of speaking. It cannot create or change anything, and yet it makes the world because it witnesses and assesses it according to tonal rules. In a very strange manner the tonal is a creator that doesn't create a thing. In other words, the tonal makes up the rules by which it apprehends the world. So, in a manner of speaking it creates the world.

We can say that the tonal is like the top of a table, an island. And on this island we have everything. This island is, in fact, the world.

There is a personal tonal for every one of us, and there is a collective one for all of us at any given time, which we can call the tonal of the times.

Look! Every table in this restaurant has the same configuration. Certain items are present on all of them. They are, however, individually different from each other; some tables are more crowded than others; they have different food on them, different plates, different atmosphere, yet we have

to admit that all the tables are very alike, in the same way it makes all the tables in this restaurant alike. Each table separately, nevertheless is an individual case, just like the personal tonal of each of us. But the important factor is to keep in mind that everything we know about ourselves and about our world is on the island of the tonal. See what I mean?

The nagual is the part of us which we do not deal with at all.

The nagual is the part of us for which there is no description—no words, no names, no feelings, no knowledge.

The nagual is not God, because God is an item of our personal tonal and of the tonal of the times. The tonal is, as I've already said, everything we think the world is composed of, including God, of course. God has no more importance other than being part of the tonal of our time.

God is only everything you can think of, therefore, properly speaking he is only another item on the island. God cannot be witnessed at will, he can only be talked about. The nagual, on the other hand, is at the service of a warrior. It can be witnessed, but it cannot be talked about.

The nagual is there surrounding the island. The nagual is there, where power hovers.

The nagual is not experience or intuition or consciousness. Those terms and everything else you may care to say are only items on the island of the tonal. The nagual, on the other hand, is only effect.

The tonal begins at birth and ends at death, but the nagual never ends. The nagual has no limit. I've said the nagual is where power hovers; that was only a way of alluding to it. By reasons of its effect, perhaps the nagual can best be understood in terms of power.

We sense, from the moment we are born, that there are two parts to us. At the time of birth, and for a while after we are all nagual. We sense then, that in order to function we need a counterpart to what we have. The tonal is missing and that gives us, from the very beginning, a feeling of incompleteness. Then the tonal starts to develop and it becomes utterly important to our functioning, so important that it opaquely the shine of the nagual, it overwhelms it. From the moment we become all tonal we do nothing else but to increment that old feeling of incompleteness which accompanies us from the moment of our birth, and which tells us constantly that there is another part to give us completeness.

From the moment we become all tonal we begin making pairs. We sense our two sides but we always represent them with items of the tonal. We say that the two parts of us are the soul and the body. Or mind and matter. Or good and evil. God and Satan, We never realize, however, that we are merely pairing things on the island, very much like pairing coffee and tea, or bread and tortillas, or chili and mustard. I tell you, we are weird animals. We get carried away and in our madness we believe ourselves to be making perfect sense.

Man doesn't move between good and evil. His true movement is between negativeness and positiveness.

No, that's wrong. There is no movement. Man is only mind.

What you call lapses and feelings is the nagual. In order to talk about it we must borrow from the island of the tonal, therefore it is more convenient not to explain it, but to simply recount its effects.

Considering that this is the final lid, the last stage of what I've been teaching you, it is not too farfetched to say that it envelops everything I mentioned since the first day we met.

You yourself would say that the nagual and the tonal are within ourselves. I myself would say that they are not, but neither of us would be right. The tonal of your time calls for you to maintain that everything dealing with your feelings and thoughts takes place within yourself. The sorcerer's tonal says the opposite, everything is outside. Who's right? No one. Inside, outside, it doesn't really matter.

To explain all this is not that simple. No matter how clever the check points of the tonal are the fact of the matter is that the nagual surfaces. It's coming to the surface is always inadvertent, though. The tonal's great art is to suppress any manifestation of the nagual in such a manner that even if its presence should be the most obvious thing in the world, it is unnoticeable.

I may go around in circles but that shouldn't surprise or annoy you. I warned you about the difficulty of understanding what I have to tell. I went through all that rigamarole because my tonal is aware that it is speaking about itself. In other words, my tonal is using itself in order to understand the information I want your tonal to be clear about. Let's say that the tonal, since it is keenly aware of how taxing it is to speak of itself has created the

terms 'I', 'myself' and so forth as a balance and thanks to them it can talk with other tonals or with itself.

Now when I say the tonal forces us to do something, I don't mean that there is a third party there. Obviously it forces itself to follow its own judgments.

On certain occasions, however, or under certain special circumstances, something in the tonal itself becomes aware that there is more to us. It is like a voice that comes from the depths, the voice of the nagual. You see, the totality of ourselves is a natural condition which the tonal cannot obliterate altogether, and there are moments, especially in the life of a warrior, in which the totality becomes apparent. At those moments one can surmise and assess what we really are.

I was concerned with those jolts you have had, because that is the way the nagual surfaces. At those moments the tonal becomes aware of the totality of oneself. It is always a jolt because that awareness disrupts the lull. I call that awareness the totality of the being that is going to die. The idea is that at the moment of death the other member of the true pair, the nagual, becomes fully operative and the awareness and memories and perceptions stored in our calves and thighs, in our back and shoulders and neck, begin to expand and disintegrate. Like the beads of an endless broken necklace, they fall asunder without the binding force of life.

The totality of ourselves is a very tacky affair. We need only a very small portion of it to fulfill the most complex tasks of life. Yet when we die, we die with the totality of ourselves, Why not, then, live with that totality.

THE DAY OF THE TONAL

I said that today was going to be the day of the tonal; I meant that today I want to deal with it exclusively.

Look at that young man in green pants and a pink shirt. Look at the way he's dressed, Look at those shoes!

He's not made to look like a bum; he is a bum. Look how weak his body is. His arms and legs are thin. He can hardly walk. No one can pretend to look that way. There is definitely something wrong with him, not his circumstances though. I have to stress that I want you to see that man as a tonal.

It entails to cease judging him in a moral sense, or excusing him on the ground that he is like a leaf at the mercy of the wind. In other words, it entails seeing a man without thinking that he is hopeless or helpless.

You know what I am talking about. You can assess that young man without condemning or forgiving him.

It doesn't matter that he's young. Youth is in no way a barrier against the deterioration of the tonal.

You thought that there might be a great many reasons for that man's condition. I find that there is only one, his tonal. It is not that his tonal is weak because he drinks. It is the other way around, he drinks because his tonal is weak. That weakness forces him to be what he is. But the same thing happens to all of us, in one form or another.

I'm giving you an explanation that you have never encountered before. It is not justification or a condemnation, though. That young man's tonal is weak and timid. And yet he's not unique. All of us are more or less in the same boat.

There is no need to treat the body in such an awful manner. But the sad fact is that all of us have learned to perfection how to make our tonal weak. I have called that indulging.

The tonal is very vulnerable. It cannot withstand maltreatment. The white man, from the day he set foot on this land, has systematically destroyed not only the Indian tonal of the time, but also the personal tonal of every Indian. One can easily surmise that for the poor average Indian the reign of the white man has been sheer hell. And yet the irony is that for another kind of Indian it has been sheer bliss.

For the sorcerer the Conquest was the challenge of a lifetime. They were the only ones who were not destroyed by it but adapted to it and used it to their ultimate advantage.

Let's say that the white man turned over all the stones that were within the limits of their own tonal. In the Indian life, however, there were things that were incomprehensible to the white man; these things he did not even notice. Perhaps it was the sheer luck of the sorcerers, or perhaps it was their knowledge that saved them. The sorcerers found themselves holding on to the only thing left uncontested, the nagual. In other words their tonal took refuge in their nagual. This couldn't have happened had it not been for the

excruciating conditions of a vanquished people. The men of knowledge of today are the product of those conditions and are the ultimate connoisseurs of the nagual, since they were left there thoroughly alone. There, the white man has never ventured. In fact he doesn't even have the idea it exists.

There are, roughly speaking, two sides to every tonal. One is the outer part, the fringe, the surface of the island. That's the part related to action and acting, the rugged side. The other part is the decision and judgment, the inner tonal, softer and more delicate, and more complex.

The proper tonal is a tonal where the two levels are in perfect harmony and balance.

For a proper tonal everything on the island of the tonal is a challenge. Another way of saying it is that for a warrior everything in his world is a challenge. The greatest challenge of all is his bid for power. But power comes from the nagual, and when a warrior finds himself at the edge of the day it means that the hour of the nagual is approaching, the warrior's hour of power.

You bid for power once and that bidding is irreversible. I won't say that you're about to fulfill your destiny, because there is no destiny. The only thing that one can say then is that you're about to fulfill your power. You have little time left and none of it for crap. A fine state. I would say that the best of us always comes out when we are against the wall, when we feel the sword dangling overhead. Personally I wouldn't have it any other way,

A warrior doesn't ever leave the island of the tonal. He uses it.

This is your world. You can't renounce it. It is useless to get angry and feel disappointed with oneself. All that proves is that one's tonal is involved in an internal battle; a battle within the tonal is one of the most inane contests I can think of. The tight life of a warrior is designed to end that struggle. From the beginning I have taught you to avoid wear and tear. Now there is no longer a war within you, not as it used to be, because the warrior's way is harmony—the harmony between actions and decisions at first, and then the harmony between the tonal and the nagual.

Throughout the time I have known you, I have talked to both your tonal and your nagual. That is the way the instruction should be constructed.

In the beginning, one has to talk to the tonal. It is the tonal that has to relinquish control. But it should be made to do so gladly. For example, your

tonal has relinquished some controls without much struggle, because it became clear to it that, had it remained the way it was the totality of it would be dead by now. In other words, the tonal is made to give up unnecessary things like self-importance and indulging, which only plunge it into boredom. The whole trouble is that the tonal clings to those things when it should be glad to rid itself of that crap.

The task is to convince the tonal to become free and fluid. That's what a sorcerer needs before anything else, a strong, free tonal. The stronger it gets the less it clings to its doings, and the easier it is to shrink it.

The tonal shrinks at given times, especially when it is embarrassed. In fact, one of the features of the tonal is its shyness. Its shyness is not really an issue. But there are certain instances when the tonal is taken by surprise, and its shyness unavoidably makes it shrink.

THE AFFAIRS OF THE NAGUAL

The affairs of the nagual can be witnessed only with the body, not the reason. Our flaw is to insist on remaining on our monotonous, tiring, but convenient island. The tonal is the villain and it shouldn't be.

The agreement that we are solid objects is the tonal's doing. When the tonal shrinks, extraordinary things are possible. But they are extraordinary only for the tonal.

The nagual, once it begins to surface, may cause a great damage to the tonal by coming out without any control. Your case is special, though. You are given to indulging in such an exaggerated manner that you would die and not even mind it, or worse yet, not even be aware that you're dying.

Your tonal has to be convinced with reasons, your nagual with actions, until one props up the other. As I have told you, the tonal rules, and yet it is very vulnerable. The nagual, on the other hand, never, or almost never, acts out; but when it does it terrifies the tonal.

The tonal must be protected at any cost. The crown has to be taken away from it, but it must remain as the protected overseer.

Any threat to the tonal always results in its death. And if the tonal dies, so does the whole man. Because of its inherent weakness the tonal is easily destroyed, and thus one of the balancing arts of the warrior is to make the

nagual emerge in order to prop up the tonal. I say that it is an art, because sorcerers know that only by boosting the tonal can the nagual emerge. See what I mean. That boosting is called personal power.

When one is dealing with the nagual, one should never look into it directly. The only way to look at the nagual is as if it were a common affair. One must blink in order to break the fixation. Our eyes are the eyes of the tonal, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that our eyes have been trained by the tonal, therefore the tonal claims them. One of the sources of your bafflement and discomfort is that your tonal doesn't let go of your eyes. The day it does, your nagual will have won a great battle. Your obsession, or better yet, everyone's obsession is to arrange the world according to the tonal's rules; so every time we are confronted with the nagual, we go out of our way to make our eyes stiff and intransigent. I must appeal to the part of your tonal which understands this dilemma and you must make an effort to free your eyes. The point is to convince the tonal that there are other worlds that can pass in front of the same windows. The eyes can be the windows to peer into boredom or to peek into that infinity.

I say that it is a very simple matter. Perhaps I say it is simple because I've been doing it for so long. All you have to do is set up your intent as a customs house. Whenever you are in the world of the tonal, you should be an impeccable tonal; no time for irrational crap. But whenever you're in the world of the nagual, you should also be impeccable; no time for rational crap. For the warrior, intent is the gate in between. It closes completely behind him when he goes either way.

Another thing one should do when facing the nagual is to shift the line of the eyes from time to time, in order to break the spell of the nagual. Changing the position of the eyes always eases the burden of the tonal. If you are in a pinch you should be able to shift by yourself. This shifting should be done only as a relief, though, not as another way of palisading yourself to safeguard the order of the tonal. My bet would be that you would strive to use this technique to hide the rationality of your tonal behind it, and thus believe you're saving it from extinction. The flaw of your reasoning is that nobody wants or seeks the extinction of the tonal's rationality. That fear is ill-founded.

You are testing now whether or not your tonal is crammed with inessentials. If there are too many unnecessary items on your island you won't be able to sustain the encounter with the nagual.

You may die. No one is capable of surviving a deliberate encounter with the nagual without a long training. It takes years to prepare the tonal for such an encounter. Ordinarily, if an average man comes face to face with the nagual the shock would be too great and he would die. The goal of a warrior's training then is not to teach him to hex or to charm, but to prepare his tonal not to crap out. A most difficult accomplishment. A warrior must be taught to be impeccable and thoroughly empty before he could even conceive of witnessing the nagual.

The island of the tonal has to be swept clean and maintained clean. That's the only alternative a warrior has. A clean island offers no resistance; it is as safe as if there were nothing there.

A sudden fright always shrinks the tonal. The problem here is not to let the tonal shrink itself out of the picture. A grave issue for a warrior is to know exactly when to allow his tonal to shrink and when to stop it. This is a great art. A warrior must struggle like a demon to shrink his tonal; and yet at the very moment the tonal shrinks, the warrior must reverse all that struggle to immediately halt that shrinking.

After the tonal shrinks, the warrior is closing the gate from the other side. As long as his tonal is unchallenged and his eyes are tuned only for the tonal's world, the warrior is on the safe side of the fence. He's on familiar grounds and knows all the rules. But when his tonal shrinks, he is on the windy side, and that opening must be shut tight immediately, or he would be swept away. And this is not just a way of talking. Beyond the gate of the tonal's eyes the wind rages. I mean a real wind. No metaphor. A wind that can blow one's life away. In fact, that is the wind that blows all living things on this earth.

As a rule the tonal must defend itself, at any cost, every time it is threatened; so it is of no real consequence how the tonal reacts in order to accomplish its defense. The only important matter is that the tonal of a warrior must become acquainted with other alternatives. What a teacher aims for, in this case, is the total weight of those possibilities. It is the weight of those new possibilities which helps to shrink the tonal. By the same token, it is the same weight which helps stop the tonal from shrinking out of the picture.

The nagual can perform extraordinary things, things that do not seem possible, things that are unthinkable for the tonal. But the extraordinary thing is that the performer has no way of knowing how those things happen.

The secret of a sorcerer is that he knows how to get to the nagual, but once he gets there, your guess is as good as his what takes place.

Let's say that a warrior learns to tune his will, to direct it to a pinpoint, to focus it wherever he wants. It is as if his will, which comes from the midsection of his body, is one single luminous fiber, a fiber that he can direct at any conceivable place. That fiber is the road to the nagual. Or I could also say that the warrior sinks into the nagual through that single fiber. Once he has sunk, the expression of the nagual is a matter of his personal temperament. If the warrior is funny the nagual is funny. If the warrior is morbid the nagual is morbid. If the warrior is mean the nagual is mean.

If you cannot understand you're in great shape. It is when you understand that you're in a mess. That's from the point of view of a sorcerer, of course. From the point of view of an average man, if you fail to understand you're sinking. In your case, I would say that an average man would think that you are disassociated, or you're beginning to become disassociated.

I've never put a ban on talking. We can talk about the nagual to your heart's content, as long as you don't try to explain it. If you remember correctly, I said that the nagual is only for witnessing. So, we can talk about what we witnessed and about how we witnessed it. You want to take on the explanation of how it is all possible though, and that is an abomination. You want to explain the nagual with the tonal. That is stupid, especially in your case, since you can no longer hide behind your ignorance. You know very well that we make sense in talking only because we stay within certain boundaries and those boundaries are not applicable to the nagual.

In order to be an average tonal a man must have unity. His whole being must belong to the island of the tonal. Without that unity a man would go berserk; a sorcerer, however, has to break that unity, but without endangering his being. A sorcerer's goal is to last; that is, he doesn't take unnecessary risks, therefore he spends years sweeping his island until a moment when he could, in a manner of speaking, sneak off it.

For the nagual there is no land, or air, or water. At this point you yourself can agree on that. So the nagual glides, or flies, or whatever it may do, in nagual's time. The two things don't jibe.

Power sets up limits and a warrior is, let's say, a prisoner of power; a prisoner who has one free choice; the choice to either act like an impeccable warrior, or like an ass. In the final analysis perhaps the warrior is not a

prisoner but a slave of power, because that choice is no longer a choice for him. To act like an ass would drain him and cause his demise.

An immortal being has all the time in the world for doubts and bewilderment and fears. A warrior, on the other hand, cannot cling to the meanings made under the tonal's order, because he knows for a fact that the totality of himself has but a little time on this earth.

Now is when I need your total attention. Attention in the sense that warriors understand attention; a true pause, in order to allow the sorcerer's explanation to fully soak through you. We are at the end of our task; all the necessary instruction has been given to you and now you must stop, look back, and reconsider your steps. Sorcerers say that this is the only way to consolidate one's gains.

This is the time to bring forth all your personal power and fulfill this impossible task of being yourself without being yourself.

It has been my duty to help you in every matter concerning your tonal and everything that I've done with you or to you was done to accomplish one single task, the task of cleaning and reordering your island of the tonal.

I've told you countless times that a most drastic change was needed if you wanted to succeed in the path of knowledge. That change is not a change of mood, or attitude, or outlook; that change entails the transformation of the island of the tonal.

At this precise point a teacher would usually say to his disciple that they have arrived at a final crossroad. To say such a thing is misleading though. In my opinion there is no final step to anything. And since there is no final step there shouldn't be any secrecy about any part of our lot as luminous beings. Personal power decides who can or who cannot profit by a revelation; my experiences with my fellow men have proven to me that very, very few of them would be willing to listen; and of those few who listen even fewer would be willing to act on what they have listened to, and of those who are willing to act even fewer have enough personal power to profit by their acts. So, the matter of secrecy about the sorcerer's explanation boils down to a routine, perhaps a routine as empty as any other routine.

At any rate now you know about the tonal and the nagual, which are the core of the sorcerer's explanation. To know about them seems quite harmless. But before you venture beyond this point a fair warning is

required; a teacher is supposed to speak in earnest terms and warn his disciple that the harmlessness and placidity of this moment are a mirage, that there is a bottomless abyss in front of him, and that once the door opens there is no way to close it again.

The years of hard training are only a preparation for the warrior's devastating encounter with...whatever lies out there, beyond this point.

The sorcerer's explanation, which doesn't seem like an explanation at all, is lethal. It seems harmless and charming, but as soon as the warrior opens himself to it, it delivers a blow that no one can parry.

To be prepared for the worst, but don't hurry or panic. You don't have any time, and yet you're surrounded by eternity. What a paradox for your reason.

What will happen here today depends on whether or not you have enough personal power to focus your unwavering attention on the wings of your perception.

Let me begin by telling you that a teacher never seeks apprentices and no one can solicit the teachings. It is always an omen which points out the apprentice. A warrior who may be in the position of becoming a teacher must be alert in order to catch his cubic centimeter of chance.

Once the apprentice has been hooked, the instruction begins. The first act of a teacher is to introduce the idea that the world we see is only a view, a description of the world. Every effort of a teacher is geared to prove this point to his apprentice. But accepting it seems to be one of the hardest things one can do; we are complacently caught in our particular view of the world, which compels us to feel and act as if we knew everything about the world. A teacher, from the very first act he performs, aims at stopping that view. Sorcerers call it stopping the internal dialogue, and they are convinced that it is the single most important technique an apprentice can learn.

In order to stop the view of the world which one has held since the cradle, it is not enough to just wish or make a resolution. One needs a practical task; that practical task is called the right way of walking. It seems harmless and nonsensical. As everything else which has power in itself or by itself, the right way of walking does not attract attention. You understood it and regarded it, at least for several years, as a curious way of behaving. It didn't dawn on you until very recently that that was the most effective way to stop your internal dialogue.

Together with the right way of walking a teacher must teach his apprentice another possibility, which is even more subtle; the possibility of acting without believing, without expecting rewards—acting just for the hell of it. I wouldn't be exaggerating if I told you that the success of a teacher's efforts depends on how well and how harmoniously he guides his apprentice in this specific respect.

Stopping the internal dialogue is, however, the key to the sorcerer's world. The rest of the activities are only props; all they do is accelerate the effect of stopping the internal dialogue.

Sorcerers are convinced that all of us are a bunch of nincompoops. We can never relinquish our crummy control voluntarily, thus we have to be tricked.

For me, tricking meant to distract your attention, or to trap it as the case required.

Erasing personal history and dreaming should only be a help. What any apprentice needs to buffer him is temperance and strength. That's why a teacher introduces the warrior's way, or living like a warrior. This is the glue that joins together everything in the sorcerer's world. Bit by bit a teacher must forge and develop it. Without the sturdiness and level-headedness of the warrior's way there is no possibility of withstanding the path of knowledge.

By now there is no way for you to recollect the immense effort that you needed to establish self-pity as a feature of your island. Self-pity bore witness to everything you did. It was just at your fingertips, ready to advise you. Death is considered by a warrior to be a more amenable advisor, which can also be brought to bear witness on everything one does, just like self-pity, or wrath. Obviously, after an untold struggle you have learned to feel sorry for yourself. But you can also learn, in the same way, to feel your impending end, and thus you can learn to have the idea of death at your fingertips. As an advisor, self-pity is nothing compared to death.

There is no way to get rid of self-pity for good; it has a definite place and character on your island, a definite façade which is recognizable. Thus, every time the occasion arises, self-pity becomes active. It has history. If you then change the façade of self-pity, you would have shifted its place of prominence.

One changes the façade by altering the use of the elements of the island. Take self-pity again. It was useful to you because you either felt important and deserving of better conditions, better treatment, or because you were unwilling to assume responsibility for the acts that brought you to the state that elicited self-pity, or because you were incapable of bringing the idea of your impending death to witness your acts and advise you.

Erasing personal history and its three companion techniques are the sorcerers' means for changing the façade of the elements of the island. For instance, by erasing your personal history, you have denied use to self-pity; in order for self-pity to work you had to feel important, irresponsible and immortal. When those feelings were altered in some way, it was no longer possible for you to feel sorry for yourself.

The same was true with all the other elements which you've changed on your island. Without using those four techniques you never could've succeeded in changing them. But changing facades means only that one has assigned a secondary place to a formerly important element. Your self-pity is still a feature of your island; it will be there in the back in the same way that the idea of your impending death, or your humbleness, or your responsibility for your acts were there, without ever being used.

Power plants have the same effect on the tonal as the right way of walking. Both flood it with information and force the internal dialogue to come to a stop. The plants are excellent for that, but very costly. They cause untold damage to the body. This is their drawback.

Those plants lead the apprentice directly to the nagual, and the ally is an aspect of it. We function at the center of reason exclusively, regardless of who we are or where we come from. Reason can naturally account in one way or another for everything that happens within its view of the world. The ally is something which is outside of that view, outside the realm of reason. It can be witnessed only at the center of the will at times when our ordinary view has stopped, therefore it is properly the nagual. Sorcerers, however, can learn to perceive the ally in a most intricate way, and in doing so they get too deeply immersed in a new view. So, in order to protect you from that fate, I did not emphasize the ally as sorcerers usually do. Sorcerers have learned after generations of using power plants to account in their views for everything that is accountable about them. I would say that sorcerers, by using their will, have succeeded in enlarging their views of the world.

My teacher and benefactor were the clearest examples of that. They were men of great power, but they were not men of knowledge. They never broke

the bounds of their enormous views and thus never arrived at the totality of themselves, yet they knew about it. It wasn't that they lived aberrant lives, claiming things beyond their reach; they knew they had missed the boat and that only at their death would the total mystery be revealed to them. Sorcery had given them only a glimpse, but never the real means to get to that elusive totality of oneself.

I gave you enough of the sorcerer's view without letting you get hooked by it. I said that only if one pits two views against each other can one weasel between them and arrive at the real world. I meant that one can arrive at the totality of oneself only when one fully understands that the world is merely a view, regardless of whether that view belongs to an ordinary man or a sorcerer.

Here is where I varied from the tradition. After a lifelong struggle I know that what matters is not to learn a new description but to arrive at the totality of oneself. One should get to the nagual without maligning the tonal, and above all without injuring one's body. That is the reason why I never wanted to discuss your encounters with power plants, or let you talk obsessively about them; there was no point in elaborating about the unspeakable. Those were true excursions into the nagual, the unknown.

Power plants shake the tonal and threaten the solidity of the whole island. It is at this time that the apprentice retreats, and wisely so; he wants to get out of the whole mess. It is also at this time that the teacher sets up his most artful trap, the worthy opponent. This trap has two purposes. First, it enables the teacher to hold his apprentice, and second, it enables the apprentice to have a point of reference for further use. Without the aid of a worthy opponent, who's not really an enemy, but a thoroughly dedicated adversary, the apprentice has no possibility of continuing on the path of knowledge. The best of men would quit at this point if it were left up to them to decide.

Because of the acts of a worthy opponent, then, an apprentice can be either blasted to pieces or changed radically.

The teacher uses the worthy opponent to force the apprentice into the choice of his life. The apprentice must choose between the warrior's world and his ordinary world. But no decision is possible unless the apprentice understands the choice; thus a teacher must have a thoroughly patient and understanding attitude and must lead his man with a sure hand to that choice, and above all he must make sure that his apprentice chooses the world and life of a warrior.

All that was required of you was to allow your tonal to become aware of having decided to join the world of sorcerers. The tonal doesn't know that decisions are in the realm of the nagual. When we think we decide, all we're doing is acknowledging that something beyond our understanding has set up the frame of our so-called decisions, and all we do is acquiesce.

In the life of a warrior there is only one thing, one issue alone which is really undecided: how far one can go on the path of knowledge and power. That is an issue which is open and no one can predict its outcome. I once told you that the freedom a warrior has is either to act impeccably or to act like a nincompoop. Impeccability is indeed the only act which is free and thus the true measure of a warrior's spirit.

After the apprentice has been given his sorcery task he's ready for another type of instruction. He is a warrior then.

Dreaming is a practical aid devised by sorcerers. They were not fools; they knew what they were doing and sought the usefulness of the nagual by training their tonal to let go for a moment, so to speak, and then grab again. This statement doesn't make sense to you. But that's what you've been doing all along; training yourself to let go without losing your marbles. Dreaming, of course, is the crown of the sorcerers' efforts, the ultimate use of the nagual.

THE SORCERER'S EXPLANATION

Sorcerers say we are inside a bubble. It is a bubble into which we are placed at the moment of our birth. At first the bubble is open, but then it begins to close until it has sealed us in. That bubble is our perception. We live inside that bubble all of our lives. And what we witness on its round walls is our own reflection.

The thing reflected is our view of the world. That view is first a description, which is given to us from the moment of our birth until all our attention is caught by it and the description becomes a view.

The teacher's task is to rearrange that view, to prepare the luminous being for the time when the benefactor opens the bubble from the outside.

The bubble is opened in order to allow the luminous being a view of his totality. Naturally this business of calling it a bubble is only a way of talking, but in this case it is an accurate way.

The delicate maneuver of leading a luminous being into the totality of himself requires that the teacher work from inside the bubble and the benefactor from the outside. The teacher reorders the view of the world. I have called that view the island of the tonal. I've said that everything we are is on that island. The sorcerer's explanation says that the island of the tonal is made by our perception, which has been trained to focus on certain elements; each of those elements and all of them together form our view of the world. The job of a teacher, insofar as the apprentice's perception is concerned, consists of reordering all the elements of the island on one half of the bubble. By now you must have realized that cleaning and reordering the island of the tonal means regrouping all of its elements on the side of reason. My task has been to disarrange your ordinary view, not to destroy it, but to force it to rally on the side of reason.

The art of a teacher is to force his disciple to group his view of the world on the right half of the bubble. That's the side of the tonal. The teacher always addresses himself to that side, and by presenting his apprentice on the one hand with the warrior's way he forces him into reasonableness, and sobriety, and strength of character and body; and by presenting him on the other hand with unthinkable but real situations which the apprentice cannot cope with, he forces him to realize that his reason, although it is a most wonderful affair, can only cover a small area.

Once the warrior is confronted with his incapacity to reason everything out, he will go out of his way to bolster and defend his defeated reason, and to that effect he will rally everything he's got around it. The teacher sees to that by hammering him mercilessly until all his view of the world is on one half of the bubble. The other half of the bubble, the one that has been cleaned, can then be claimed by something sorcerers call will.

We can better explain this by saying that the task of the teacher is to wipe clean one half of the bubble and to reorder everything on the other half. The benefactor's task then is to open the bubble on the side that has been cleaned. Once the seal is broken, the warrior is never the same. He has then the command of his totality. Half of the bubble is the ultimate center of reason, the tonal. The other half is the ultimate center of will, the nagual. That is the order that should prevail; any other arrangement is nonsensical and petty, because it goes against nature; it robs us of our magical heritage and reduces us to nothing.

We have one single issue left. Sorcerers call it the secret of the luminous beings, and that is the fact that we are perceivers. We men and all the other luminous beings on earth are perceivers. That is our bubble, the bubble of perception. Our mistake is to believe that the only perception worthy of acknowledgement is what goes through our reason. Sorcerers believe that reason is only one center and that it shouldn't take so much for granted.

There's no way to get to the sorcerer's explanation unless one has willingly used the nagual, or rather, unless one has willingly used the tonal to make sense out of one's actions with the nagual. Another way of making all this clear is to say that the view of the tonal must prevail if one is going to use the nagual the way sorcerers do.

Order in perception is the exclusive realm of the tonal; only there can our actions have a sequence; only there are they like stairways where one can count the steps. There is nothing of that sort in the nagual. Therefore, the view of the tonal is a tool, and as such it is not only the best tool but the only one we've got.

This is the sorcerer's explanation. The nagual is the unspeakable. All the possible feelings and beings and selves float in it like barges, peaceful, unaltered, forever. Then the glue of life binds some of them together. When the glue of life binds those feelings together a being is created, a being that loses the sense of its true nature and becomes blinded by the glare and clamor of the area where beings hover, the tonal. The tonal is where all the unified organization exists. A being pops into the tonal once the force of life has bound all the needed feelings together. I said that because I know that as soon as the force of life leaves the body all those single awarenesses disintegrate and go back again to where they came from, the nagual. What a warrior does in journeying into the unknown is very much like dying, except that his cluster of single feelings do not disintegrate but expand a bit without losing their togetherness. At death, however, they sink deeply and move independently as if they had never been a unit.

There is no way to refer to the unknown. One can only witness it. The sorcerer's explanation says that each of us has a center from which the nagual can be assessed, the will. Thus, a warrior can venture into the nagual and let his cluster arrange and rearrange itself in any way possible. I've said to you that the expression of the nagual is a personal matter. I meant that it is up to the individual warrior himself to direct the arrangement and rearrangement of that cluster. The human form or human feelings is the original one, perhaps it is the sweetest form of them all to us; there are

however, an endless number of alternative forms which the cluster may adopt. I've said to you that a sorcerer can adopt any form he wants. That is true. A sorcerer who is in possession of the totality of himself can direct parts of his cluster to join in any conceivable way. The force of life is what makes all that shuffling possible. Once the force of life is exhausted there is no way to reassemble that cluster.

I have called that cluster the bubble of perception. I have also said that it is sealed, closed tightly, and that it never opens until the moment of our death. Yet it could be made to open. Sorcerers have obviously learned that secret, and although not all of them arrive at the totality of themselves, they know about the possibility of it. They know that the bubble opens only when plunged into the nagual.

This is the last of the sorcerer's tricks. Let's say that what I'm going to reveal to you is the last bit of the sorcerer's explanation. Up to this point your reason has haphazardly followed my doings. Your reason is willing to admit that the world is not as the description portrays it, that there is much more to it than what meets the eye. In other words one can perceive the here and the there at once.

Your reason cannot fight the physical knowledge that you are a nameless cluster of feelings. Your reason at this point might even admit that there is another center of assemblage, the will, through which it is possible to judge or assess and use the extraordinary effects of the nagual. It has finally dawned on your reason that one can reflect the nagual through the will, although one can never explain it.

The conviction that there is a real you is a result of the fact that you have rallied everything you've got around your reason. At this point your reason admits that the nagual is the indescribable, not because the evidence has convinced it, but because it is safe to admit that. Your reason is on safe ground, all the elements of the tonal are on its side.

To make reason feel safe is always the task of the teacher. I've tricked your reason into believing that the tonal was accountable and predictable. I have labored to give you the impression that only the nagual was beyond the scope of explanation; the proof that the tricking was successful is that at this moment it seems to you that in spite of everything you have gone through, there is still a core that you can claim as your own, your reason. That's a mirage. Your precious reason is only a center of assemblage, a mirror that reflects something which is outside of it.

The last piece of the sorcerers' explanation says that reason is merely reflecting an outside order, and that reason knows nothing about that order, it cannot explain it, in the same way it cannot explain the nagual. Reason can only witness the effects of the tonal, but never could it understand it, or unravel it. The very fact that we are thinking and talking points out an order that we follow without ever knowing how we do that, or what the order is.

Sorcerers do the same thing with their will. They say that through the will they can witness the effects of the nagual. I can add now that through reason, no matter what we do with it, or how we do it, we are merely witnessing the effects of the tonal. In both cases there is no hope, ever, to understand or to explain what it is we are witnessing.

A sorcerer can use the wings of his perception to touch other sensibilities, a crow's for instance, a coyote's, a cricket's, or the order of other worlds in that infinite space. The wings of perception can take us to the most recondite confines of the nagual, or to the inconceivable worlds of the tonal.

We have arrived at the last part of the sorcerers' explanation. I once told you that those two points were outside of oneself and yet they were not. That is the paradox of the luminous beings. The tonal of every one of us is but a reflection of that indescribable unknown filled with order; the nagual of every one of us is but a reflection of that indescribable voice that contains everything.

As you sit here now, you have nothing except the force of your life that binds that cluster of feelings.

Sit here and turn off your internal dialogue. You may gather the power needed to unfold the wings of your perception and fly into that infinitude.

Once you have entered the unknown by yourself you cannot depend on us to bring you back, so a decision is mandatory; you must decide whether or not to return.

I must also add that few warriors survive the encounter with the unknown; not so much because it is hard, but because the nagual is enticing beyond any statement, and warriors who are journeying into it find that to return to the tonal, or to the world of order and noise and pain, is a most unappealing affair.

The decision to stay or to return is done by something in us which is neither our reason nor our desire, but our will, so there is no way of knowing the outcome of it beforehand.

If you choose not to return you will disappear as if the earth had swallowed you. But if you choose to return to this earth you must wait like a true warrior until your particular tasks are finished. Once they are finished either in success or defeat, you will have the command over the totality of yourself.

This means that the warrior has finally encountered power. No one can tell what each warrior would do with it; perhaps you will roam peacefully and unnoticed on the face of the earth, or perhaps you will turn out to be a hateful man, or perhaps notorious, or kind. All that depends on the impeccability and the freedom of your spirit.

The important thing, however, is your task. That is the bestowal made by a teacher and benefactor to their apprentices. I pray that you will succeed in bringing your tasks to a culmination.

Waiting to fulfill a task is a very special waiting. If you decide to return to this earth you will have to wait like a true warrior until your tasks are fulfilled. Your only chance is your impeccability. You must wait without looking back. You must wait without expecting rewards. And you must aim all of your personal power at fulfilling your tasks.

If you don't act impeccably, if you begin to fret and get impatient and desperate, you'll be cut down mercilessly by the sharpshooters from the unknown. If, on the other hand, your impeccability and personal power are such that you are capable of fulfilling your tasks, you will then achieve the promise of power. And what's that promise, you may ask. It is a promise that power makes to men as luminous beings. Each warrior has a different fate, so there is no way of telling what that promise will be for you.

You have learned that the backbone of a warrior is to be humble and efficient. You have learned to act without expecting anything in return, Now I tell you that in order to withstand what lies ahead of you beyond this day you'll need your ultimate forbearance.

A warrior must always be ready. The fate of all of us here has been to know that we are prisoners of power. No one knows why us in particular, but what a great fortune.

We are all alone. That is our condition.

We are alone. But to die alone is not to die in loneliness.

A warrior acknowledges his pain, but he doesn't indulge in it. Thus the mood of a warrior who enters into the unknown is not one of sadness; on the contrary, he's joyful because he feels humbled by his great fortune, confident that his spirit is impeccable, and above all, fully aware of his efficiency. A warrior's joyfulness comes from having accepted his fate, and from having truthfully assessed what lies ahead of him.

The life of a warrior cannot possibly be cold and lonely and without feelings, because it is based on his affection, his devotion, his dedication to his beloved. And who, you may ask, is his beloved?

This earth, this world. For a warrior there can be no greater love.

Only if one loves this earth with unbending passion can one release one's sadness. A warrior is always joyful because his love is unalterable and his beloved, the earth, embraces him and bestows upon him inconceivable gifts. The sadness belongs only to those who hate the very thing that gives shelter to their beings.

This lovely being, which is alive to its last recesses and understands every feeling, soothed me, it cured me of my pains, and finally when I had fully understood my love for it, it taught me freedom.

Listen to that barking. That is the way my beloved earth is helping me now to bring this last point to you. That barking is the saddest thing one can hear. That dog's barking is the nocturnal voice of a man. It comes from a house in that valley toward the south. A man is shouting through his dog, since they are companion slaves for life. It speaks of his sadness, his boredom. He's begging his death to come and release him from the dull and dreary chains of his life.

That barking, and the loneliness it creates, speaks of the feelings of men. Men for whom an entire life was like one Sunday afternoon which was not altogether miserable, but rather hot and dull and uncomfortable. They sweated and fussed a great deal. They didn't know where to go, or what to do. That afternoon left them only with the memory of petty annoyances and tedium, and then suddenly it was over; it was already night.

The antidote that kills that poison is here. The sorcerers' explanation cannot at all liberate the spirit. Look at you. You have gotten the sorcerers' explanation, but it doesn't make any difference that you know it. You're more alone than ever, because without an unwavering love for the being that gives you shelter, aloneness is loneliness.

Only the love for this splendorous being can give freedom to a warrior's spirits; and freedom is joy, efficiency, and abandon in the face of any odds. That is the last lesson. It is always left for the very last moment, for the moment of ultimate solitude when a man faces his death and his aloneness. Only then does it make sense.

There are many ways of saying farewell. The best way is perhaps by holding a particular memory of joyfulness. For instance, if you live like a warrior, the warmth you felt when the little boy rode on your shoulders will be fresh and cutting for as long as you live. That is a warrior's way of saying farewell.

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